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THROUGH

SCINDE, THE PUNJAB, HINDOSTAN,

AND THE

HIMALAYAH MOUNTAINS.

By HUGO JAMES,

BENGAL ARMY, AND FORMERLY WITH MAJOR HERBERT EDWARDES, C.B.

VOL. I.

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A VOLUNTEER'S SCRAMBLE,

ETC.

CHAPTER I.

Preliminary Remarks—Sea Voyage to Bombay—Deaths at Sea—Sight Land—Anchor in Bombay Harbour—Scene on Landing—Parsee Gardens—Esplanade.

MANY Authors prefix to their works several tedious pages of desultory matter by way of preface, which the reader probably would rather dispense with. In justice to myself I am compelled to follow, in a measure, this example, but at the same time, will endeavour to inflict as little preliminary matter as possible. The present work has been hurriedly transcribed from my journal, so that, perhaps, severe critics will feel disposed

to censure the off-hand style and grammatical errors contained in this maiden publication. Though the following pages cannot boast of or possess any claims to literary elegance, nevertheless the general reader may, perhaps, derive a few hours pleasure whilst perusing a Volunteer's Scramble through various Eastern Countries. I can confidently state that all contained herein are facts, and this alone may pass as some excuse for all minor errors. Byron has said, "there's nothing so difficult as a beginning," and many, doubtless, have frequently arrived at the same conclusion, particularly junior aspirants for literary fame; but enough upon this subject.

The reader must now be introduced to the good ship F——, a noble craft engaged by the East India Company to convey troops to Bombay. We will dispense with the now well known description of a sea voyage; suffice it to say we had our share of calms, squalls, and gales, but providence shielded us from all dangers, and at last we arrived off Ceylon, though land had not yet made its appearance. The afternoon had been excessively close, and the heat so oppressive, that even the poultry and live stock were gasping for breath. The passengers were lolling about the decks, some dozing in easy arm-chairs, whilst others, more hardy, stretched themselves along a soft plank, and with the fragrant weed in their

mouths, listlessly gazed up at the flapping sails (for there was scarcely a breath of wind); the more juvenile freight talked and amused each other with their ideas of India. Poor deluded lads, when will you discover that gold is not the only metal that glistens in the sunshine? The crew, not at all backward in taking advantage of the weather, are asleep forward; the rough sons of Neptune, not very particular as regards a pillow, make use of an anchor, or a coil of rope, either of which answers their purpose equally as well as if a feather pillow had been placed at their disposal. A few individuals certainly are busy; for instance, the worthy cook and his hopeful mate; the carpenter is never idle, nor is the boatswain. The man at the helm is supposed to be on duty, but even this last mentioned individual considers his occupation an irksome one. His right foot carelessly reclines upon a spoke of the wheel, and with a hat slouching over his eyes, he appears monstrously inclined to allow his charge to roam where she lists, whilst he indulges in a short siesta.

We have been so engaged with the occupants of the poop and galley, that we have passed unnoticed a loiterer shuffling to and fro about the forecastle; at first it would be difficult to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion, as to what kind of duty our friend was engaged in. The curiosity of the speculator is, how-

ever, soon satisfied, for to express oneself in nautical phraseology, "slewing" himself round, and raising both hands on either side of his weather-beaten cheeks, the rough son of old Neptune, startles the entire mass of slumberers, by roaring out, "Land on the starboard bow." This pleasant intimation produces a rapid change amongst the hitherto drowsy freight, and now observe the noisy multitude scrambling up the rigging, anxiously straining their eyes towards the delicious object that meets their gaze. No æronaut, who an hour previous had hoyered over our vessel, (not at all a bad emblem of the Castle of Indolence) could have credited his senses on beholding the now over-crowded decks. The soldiers in a variety of costumes, swarm up through the hatchways, with an ardour only surpassed at the storming of a breach; the prospect of again treading upon terra firma enlivens the poor recruits, whilst those who despaired of ever again seeing land, once more regain their spirits, and bandy jests with their fellow comrades. Yonder lanky ensign rushes impetuously down to his cabin, in search of sporting weapons, for tigers, deer, pig, and game too numerous to mention, although the ensign's excited mind takes them in at a thought, rush in quick succession past his heated brain. The happy skipper rubs his hands, and already calculates upon the chances of obtaining a profitable homeward freight, and

hopes to find a ready market at Bombay for his own little private adventure, consisting of Dutch and English cheeses, hams, jams, and other European goods. The jolly old-tars hitch up their unmentionables, and "calculate as how we must be a little to the west'ard o' Ceylon, or tarnation nigh thereabouts." The passengers, who latterly complained of the days being over long, are naturally enough delighted at the prospect of a speedy release from the confinement of a ship.

The F—— had been nearly six months performing her ocean voyage, and since the date of her departure from England, not a glimpse of land had greeted our vision. Death had been perpetually hovering around us, selecting as victims, alike both old and young, several cases occurring under very melancholy circumstances. Well can I remember the night on which we were all disturbed from our slumbers by a succession of heart-rending screams, followed by an immense uproar and great confusion. The general impression that for a time prevailed, was, that some unforeseen accident had happened to the ship. Enquiries having been instituted, it was at last ascertained that the lamentations and sudden outbursts of grief, proceeded from the wife of a carpenter, who, through the interest of one of the Directors, had just been nominated to some appointment within the Bombay Presidency. Though considered a

clever mechanic, his circumstances were far from being in a flourishing condition. With the crew and passengers he had become a great favourite, on account of his civility and readiness to assist those who required his mechanical aid. His death was sudden, for on Christmas eve he had been seen by his poor little children, preparing a cake for the morrow; at about midnight his spirit shook off this earthly mould. The widow for a long time refused to be comforted, twice she attempted suicide; but kindness eventually reconciled her to the sad bereavement, and a liberal subscription being raised, no doubt the poor widow's prospects were brighter than at first she imagined they would be.

Several other casualties occurring, the recruits became alarmed, and a gloom spread over the vessel which took some time to disperse, such a hold had it taken over the minds of the superstitious Irish recruits. No wonder then that the joyful intelligence of the near approach to our destination, raised the spirits of all. During the night we hove to, and refilled empty water casks, besides obtaining a few sheep and pigs, the latter being purchased for a mere trifle.

The following morning, a smart breeze from the south sprang up, every stitch of canvass was set, and once more we were plunging through the waters.

The Malabar coast is by no means uninteresting, as

viewed a couple of miles away out at sea. Flat ground predominates nearly all the way, but occasionally hilly ranges might be seen in the distance far inland, though sometimes a sloping hill would descend almost as far as the beach. As we glided past the shore, how happy we juvenile wanderers were; scarcely could we realize the notion that India, with its gorgeous pageantry, was within a few miles of us. Could it be possible that the trees waving their heads gracefully to and fro, were really plaintains, cocoa nuts, and mangos? What a strong inclination all felt to jump overboard, and like colts set loose from the stable, run amongst the verdant groves that decked the sea-shore. After sighting Ceylon, our run up to Bombay was completed in a few days, the anchor was dropped, and I dropped into a little boat.

On landing, a host of miserable and dirty vagabonds, endeavoured by the most strenuous and repeated charges to obtain possession of my luggage. Matters even arrived at such a state, that one or two of the assailants attempted to capture the master as well as the goods. By dint of a few practical demonstrations in the pugilistic line, the enemy were forced to beat a retreat, and at a reasonable distance commenced a parley. The noise and tumult now became perfectly deafening; in fact, had this scene taken place in the streets of London, the

police to a certainty, would have made us "move on." Hundreds of testimonials, mostly forgeries, were held up for inspection; all offered their services, some as bearers, and others as kitmutgars, syces, &c. &c. The unsuccessful candidates did not lose their appointments for want of personal exertions, where every vagabond spoke as loud as his lungs permitted him; some delay ensued ere I selected from the sable rabble one of the noisy fellows to perform the duties of a servant as a temporary measure. This man, as might have been expected, proved to be a consummate scoundrel; by artful management he had already contrived to walk off with a few articles, and there can exist no doubt, that had he continued in possession of the property confided to his care for only a month longer, he would have cleared the boxes of nearly all their contents. Like the Calcutta servants, most of the Bombay menials decline proceeding with a gentleman who is about to leave Bombay for the interior. The splendid harvest reaped from fresh arrivals from Europe, offers too great a temptation. Immediately intelligence reaches them that a vessel has arrived in harbour, away they start ready to pounce upon the stranger, *nolens volens*. The nuisance thus inflicted upon you is intolerable; a dozen men anxious to obtain service, thrust their capacious umbrellas into your mouth, eyes, and nose; their avowed object being to

screen "master's face from the sun," an act of charity never accomplished, considering, that as fast as one man raises his chattah, another knocks it away to make room for his own, and so on. Young officers should be particularly careful on their first landing, to engage the services of honest and good menials, and not to employ the first man that comes before them. By requesting some friend, or your hotel proprietor to assist you, this can easily be effected, and instead of being attended by a rogue, you may perhaps meet with a man, who, if treated properly, will not prove ungrateful. The man I engaged, directed me to a first-rate hotel (since destroyed by fire), and made himself useful by procuring coolies to convey the luggage to my rooms. Once having seen all things safe, the old scamp was dismissed for the day, and having partaken of an excellent dinner, I retired to my couch, when the drowsy god received me as a pilgrim; and thus, kind reader, was passed my first night in India.

For want of other amusement, and always having been an early riser, on the following morning I took an hour's walk. The novelty of the country, with its strange customs and people, so vastly different in every respect to England, retains a stranger in one continual state of excitement. The Parsee gentlemen's gardens possess many attractions, so that, together with the

polite attention always received by a visitor, a stroll through these beautiful grounds amply remunerates one for the trouble of going there. The magnificent houses and furniture in taste, correspond with the horticultural arrangement; costly china vases three or four feet in height, and beautiful Persian carpets of exquisite workmanship, are profusely displayed in every apartment. On requesting permission to inspect one of these residences, though his master was absent, the head domestic chaperoned us over the whole estate, and finally asked us, on our return to the house, what beverage we felt inclined to imbibe. Such had been his master's orders with regard, at least, to all European visitors. (Query, would many English gentlemen of the present day, act with such unlimited hospitality?)

Having selected a few letters of introduction, they were dispatched to their various destinations. On our arrival in Bombay, I discovered it to be the "cold season," and many families were residing in tents upon the Esplanade, whilst a few, more luxurious than their fellows, had erected temporary wooden buildings. On one occasion I visited a tent inhabited by a married officer, and arriving fresh from England, these patriarchal abodes excited much surprise and curiosity. The drawing-room, as the entrance tent was designated, might have occupied a space some twenty feet square, and

was furnished in a style worthy its appellation. A piano stood in one corner, a well-supplied bookcase in another, whilst small neat divans, tables, chairs, &c., were tastefully distributed about the tent. A white cloth was stretched across the ground, over which a pretty little Persian carpet was placed, thus completing the arrangements. The dining-room adjoined the above, and on either side sleeping apartments were connected, the whole being enclosed by kanauts some eight feet high. Those who have never had an opportunity of inspecting the interior arrangements of these domiciles, can form but a poor idea of the comfort and elegance that predominate within.

Immediately the regular rains commence, of course, the tents are "struck," and the owners retire to more substantial dwellings. These tents must be expensive, particularly for married people. I should imagine at a rough guess, fully 1,200 rupees must be the price of a first-rate set of tents. Sir Robert Oliver, the late Superintendent of the Indian Navy, kindly placed a room in his temporary house at my disposal. His summer building being constructed of thin wood, was much cooler, and far preferable to the tents. Sir Robert's artificial flower garden was a happy invention, every tree or flower being cultivated in large green tubs. The building easily took to pieces, so the host informed

me, and when that tyrant to the European constitution, the "hot weather" made its appearance, garden and house, as if by magic, vanished instantaneously from its foundation. My short residence in Bombay, prevented me from inspecting the few little wonders of the islands, but in going through the native portion of the town, nothing but filthy streets, and dirtier occupants, could be seen.

CHAPTER II.

Kurrachee—Sir Charles Napier—Garrah—Camel Riding—Tatta Murders—Jurruck—Kotree—Sewan—A Native Nautch—Arrival at Larkanah.

THE sea passage from Bombay to Kurrachee in Scinde, occupies about fifty hours or so, according to the season of the year. The accommodation on board the steamers which run between these places is good, and the greatest attention is paid to the comforts and wants of passengers. Travellers from Bombay immediately notice the difference in stature between the Scinde people and those left behind them; the former are a fine tall and handsome race of men, though they unfortunately are the most uncleanly and filthy set of fellows residing on the face of the earth. There is a splendid natural harbour at Kurrachee, which with some outlay could be vastly improved, owing to its position; no doubt, at some future period, Kurrachee will become a very important seaport town, and the day is not far off, when large vessels will be seen off Point Minora. The Court of

Directors, with their usual energy and zeal, in lending assistance towards promoting the commercial prosperity of India, have intimated lately to the British merchants, that in all probability, a profitable trade might eventually be carried on at Kurrachee. The Indian press are of a similar opinion.

On my landing at Kurrachee, the Judge Advocate introduced me to Sir C. Napier, who was then Governor of Scinde. We found the hero of Meanee perched upon a high stool, strongly resembling those used by clerks in a London banking establishment. The General gave me a warm welcome, and shaking hands in that frank and open manner so habitual to old soldiers, exclaimed, "Ah, I know your brother well, only had one fault to find with him, and that was when he married—never you marry, and you'll make a soldier, a soldier ought never to marry; but never mind, dine with me at three to day, I am busy now, good bye;" and with this hint that he wished to be left alone, he once more, even before our departure from the room, regained his desk, and appeared deeply engaged inspecting official correspondence. At three, with clock work punctuality, we sat down to dinner, and at intervals during the meal, Sir Charles displayed his conversational powers to perfection; his anecdotes, and advice, blended (be it remembered) together, greatly conduced to the pleasant-

ness of the party; we met again at the theatre, and as a proof of his wonderful tact in recognizing persons whom he had only once met before, he came up to me and spoke about the evening's performance. All those who have served under the Governor, cannot fail to like him, so affable and ready was he to assist all who performed their duty in a soldier-like manner, whilst to the delinquent he proved a most severe judge. The Scindees, though they feared could not help respecting him, for Sir Charles never refused to listen to their complaints, and having himself set the example, he determined to make all in judicial authority follow it. All the officers I met with in Scinde, and indeed every one capable of judging, spoke in very high terms of their really kind-hearted and talented General.

The town itself of Kurrachee does not present a very picturesque appearance, nor are its streets, houses, or inhabitants, famous for cleanliness. The stench in traversing part of the town is abominable, and any individual desirous of exploring the city, should not be gifted with olfactory nerves of too sensitive a nature. This description of Kurrachee refers to some seven years ago; no doubt, time and British rule have performed wonderful alterations towards its improvements.

The late Major Blenkins endeavoured to establish a

garden in the vicinity of Kurrachee. The vegetable produce proved a great boon to European soldiers quartered in the station, and the grounds constituted an agreeable promenade for those who felt inclined to take pedestrian exercise. A sojourn at this sandy place for two weeks was quite enough, and luckily at the expiration of that period, I became acquainted with Captain M——, resident at the Court of His Highness, Ameer Ali Morad, of Khyrpoor, at that time the only independent prince in Scinde, the rest having been despatched to Calcutta, where to this day they are maintained by our Government as state prisoners. Captain M—— was about proceeding to his appointment, consequently I embraced this favourable opportunity of procuring an experienced companion for the journey. It turned out that Captain M—— was an old acquaintance of my brother, who held a staff appointment in Upper Scinde, and resided within thirty miles of M——'s abode. M—— was an old stager, and rapidly effected all necessary arrangements for our departure, which took place on a fine evening in February. Travelling Palkee dawk to a novice, is at first a horrible punishment, which may well be likened to purgatory; the gutteral sounds with which the bearers treat their burthen, are perfectly maddening; they keep up an everlasting humming sort of accompaniment, that

ceases only for a moment when they stop to relieve each other. Away—they commence again—hah ha he—hi he he—hah he hah—hi he hi, facon, bacon—bacon, facon—hi he hi—bacon, facon, facon, bacon—and so on. Until you get accustomed to this music, sleep is out of the question, but by degrees towards dawn of day, having endured twelve hours of annoyance, you may contrive to enjoy a short doze. Such was the case with me, and on awaking, I discovered that the Palkee had been gently placed upon the ground during my slumber; old M—— was still asleep, and his conveyance was resting underneath the verandah of a neat little bungalow. Hallo M——, where are we? Oh! only thirty miles from Kurrachee. What, have these fellows carried us thirty miles during the night. Oh! don't bother, replied M——, again composing himself for another snooze, don't bother, but go to sleep. It did not take long to make him insensible to the world and its cares, but far different was it with me.

According to my late English ideas, we were acting in a most unjustifiable and cool manner, for, uninvited we had taken possession of some private gentleman's abode; my alarm naturally increased on perceiving an individual seated at breakfast who appeared unaware of our arrival; M——, without taking any notice, having allowed me to pinch and disturb him for fully five

minutes, at last arose from his bed and enquired, "what was the row?" My cause of uneasiness having been explained, M——, to my surprise, walked into the room, and received a warm welcome from the breakfast eater; a sudden light burst upon my wondering senses, for M—— introduced me to his friend. During breakfast we ascertained the name of the station to be Garrah. A strange phenomenon occurred during our stay here, namely, the rain fell in torrents, without intermission, for thirty-six hours. In such weather it was impossible to ride upon camels with any degree of safety, for the wet and slippery ground is very bad for these animals.

A native infantry regiment was formerly stationed at Garrah, but when M—— and I visited the lines, they were in a sadly dilapidated deserted condition.

The bungalows, formerly inhabited by the officers, were fast falling to decay, several roofs had been blown entirely away, the walls were crumbling to pieces, and the whole cantonment presented a gloomy aspect. We paused on arriving in front of one of these houses, and for a few moments gazed around the ruinous building, until we discovered in the corner of the compound, the tomb of some poor victim to the climate of Scinde; a stunted shrub drooped mournfully over the resting place of the English exile, whilst a crow, as withered as the small tree upon which it had perched, croaked dismally

over the grave; C——, an engineer officer, was the only European inhabitant, and he must indeed have rejoiced at the sight of our white faces.

The rain not giving any indication of abating, and neither of us relishing the idea of a forty miles ride in the wet, we availed ourselves of C——'s hospitable offer, that we should remain with him till the weather became finer, when he would place at our disposal his own riding camel. During the night our slumbers were frequently interrupted by innumerable rats and mice, performing their midnight revels over our bodies; all efforts to put them to flight were futile, consequently, to use an American phrase, if I did not curse my four-footed annoyers, "it was a caution." Next morning, after partaking of an early meal, which, in India, is termed a "Chota hazree," one of C——'s servant's informed us that the camel was ready. To a fresh arrival (or using the Indian expression, a griff) the announcement was anything but agreeable. M—— was the guide, and being moreover an old Indian, volunteered to drive the camel, nor could any friend have mounted a Blackheath jackass with greater *sang-froid* than he did the long necked camel kneeling down before him. As for myself, on hearing the creature grunt and whine, occasionally turning round his head, and most viciously as it would appear, longing to bite my legs (camels, as it may be

remembered, have very long necks), I steadily refused to mount such an unearthly quadruped, M——, however, quietly hinted that it was far better to ride forty miles on camel back, than to walk the same distance on foot; so deeming it advisable to take a seat behind M——, without further hesitation I climbed up into the saddle, and away we trotted, not, however, without presage of misfortune on my part. The first five miles were traversed securely and pleasantly enough, and we were sorry at having neglected to bring our fowling pieces, for already numerous partridges, quail, and a few oobarra (ottis tardus), had approached within gun shot. M—— relieved the tediousness of the road, by relating anecdotes connected with the numerous sporting scenes he had witnessed in India.

Amongst other reminiscences, was one, that a belief existed amongst the Scindees, that when a camel falls, it generally comes down on its side, and not like a horse on its knees; he was repeating this interesting incident when our saddle suddenly swerved round—a most disagreeable occurrence, and one which we had not for a moment anticipated. Of course the scene which ensued was ludicrous in the extreme. I caught M—— by the waist, vainly did he entreat me to let go, for no leech ever stuck to a sprained limb with greater pertinacity than I did to poor M——; fortunately, by some unac-

countable means, we managed to convince the camel of our awkward position, and he consented to kneel down. This mishap occurred in a dense jungle, so assistance was not procurable, and really more experienced skill than that which we possessed was required; for let alone our ignorance with respect to saddling a camel, our risible faculties were so busily employed for several minutes, that some time elapsed before matters assumed a favourable aspect, and though ultimately we secured the seat, I did not remain long in it.

Foolishly, I did not wait till M—— held the brute; the vile creature, as if in spite, suddenly arose, before my right leg was over his back, my balance lost, of course away I was despatched, sprawling into a mass of mud a foot deep. M—— roared and cried with laughter at this second and worse disaster, whilst I was conscious of looking rather "small." Once more gaining the saddle, M—— again took the management, and the remainder of the march was performed without encountering any further accidents; but considering that we had been exposed alternately to sun and rain for upwards of fourteen hours, we were not sorry to find ourselves at the Tatta Hotel, which was under the management of a Portuguese, who appeared to be a very civil and enterprising man, but complained bitterly of the paucity of travellers. Although but short notice was given, in less

than an hour an excellent breakfast was placed on the table, which rapidly disappeared, our appetites having been sharpened by our day's fatigues, and our landlord was evidently highly pleased at observing what ample justice was done to his cookery. From all accounts Tatta was formerly a city of vast importance, and boasts of having once been the seat of Government; many years ago her silks, cottons, and glazed tiles were despatched to almost every part of India, but at the same time she bore the stigma of being the most licentious city in the universe.

The worst species of crimes were committed in the open streets, public places, and thoroughfares, until the common remark "a man from Tatta is of no good" became proverbial, and was applied to any individual who had given public or private offence. Even just previous to our occupation of Scinde, the character of the people of Tatta was much abused by Scindees themselves. Scattered round the suburbs and within the precincts of the town are several handsome tombs, mosques, and buildings, but all were fast going to decay; one temple larger than the rest we entered, yet not without a little hesitation on the part of the official in charge, who murmured at our entering with our shoes on. A few silver coins removed the prejudice of the old man, but after all there was nothing to be seen in-

side, in fact, the glazed dome was the best part of the building.

The camel had to be returned to its owner, so after a lengthy wordy warfare, we were enabled to hire a couple of very small ponies to carry us on to the next halting place, which was called Jurruck, and proved to be a large town on the right bank of the Indus. Our march, considering the distance, about thirty miles, turned out not only tedious, but very uncomfortable, the country passed through was monotonous in the extreme, the road certainly was not exactly impassable, but it was far from being a good one.

Once we came across a large shooting preserve, that in days gone by had been a favourite resort of the Scinde Ameers, where with their Court and Harem many revolting scenes of debauchery took place. On approaching Jurruck, we passed through sandy hillocks and stoney ridges, numerous little heaps of stones lay scattered here and there on the road side, and suspended from the branches of trees were small pieces of cloth varying in colour. Murders were formerly of frequent occurrence in Scinde, and upon the spot where the outrage was committed it was usual to cast stones, and every wayfarer added one to the heap; thus in the course of a few years these monuments attained to some size; and if a tree happened to grow near the spot,

pieces of cloth were attached to the boughs with the same motive. We reached Jurruck late at night, and were much distressed for a lodging, until the Kardar or head man of the town, offered us, like a good Samaritan, the use of his stables. The English reader may exclaim, how excessively unpolite, why not have placed a room in his own domicile at their disposal; but the reader must be informed that the natives are extremely jealous of their ladies, and seldom permit strangers, particularly Europeans, to pry into their establishments; after all, the stables proved even luxurious quarters, for how many individuals in India, Europeans too, have had worse shelter than a well built stable. The jackals, dogs, and a native with influenza, annoyed us a little during the night, but this style of thing one rapidly gets accustomed to in India. Next morning we were up by daylight, but our breakfast was not over and above sumptuous—a couple of eggs, and a delicious bowl of fresh milk, formed the meal, but even this homely fare was better than proceeding on a long journey with an empty stomach.

At about six o'clock, A.M., we started for Kotree, a small village opposite to Hyderabad; during the march, and close to Jurruck, if I remember correctly, we obtained a lovely view of the mighty Indus. The jungle being partly under water, represented so many little

fairy islands; the beautiful dark green foilage contrasting strangely with the muddy stream that furiously dashed past, and through them; a native boat, with its dingy sail, ever and anon glided rapidly between these islands, thereby adding to the beauty of the scene; our lazy ponies had been exchanged for camels, but M—— had experienced quite enough of camel driving, so a couple of men accompanied us. The country improves greatly about Kotree, large tracts of land were under cultivation, and the jungle trees appeared stronger and healthier than those we had previously come across.

On the road herds of camels and oxen kept perpetually peeping through the jungle as we passed. The camels presented a singular appearance, as with long extended necks, they proceeded to their favorite grazing grounds, the tinkling of the little bell ornaments suspended round their feet and shoulders, is by no means unpleasant to the ear; but when once they commence their grunting, the noise is horrible.

At Kotree, we received a warm welcome from Captain Powell, of the Indian navy, and commandant of the Indus flotilla. Every traveller in Scinde is acquainted with this officer's unbounded hospitality, and willingness to assist those who require his aid. Kotree is a pretty little spot, but at the time of our visit few Europeans dwelt there; however, those few residents there

had erected fine houses, with neat gardens adjoining. The station likewise boasted of reading rooms, and a billiard table. It was at this place that severe indisposition compelled me to remain on a couch, and undergo what I detest, medical discipline. The kind host proved an excellent and skilful nurse; so that, thanks to his judicious treatment, in less than a fortnight the invalid was proclaimed convalescent.

The river opposite to Hyderabad is very broad, and it took us some time to cross, whenever we visited the above-mentioned city. The far famed fort is a strange looking building, but we were disappointed with it; the only thing that attracted my attention was, the variety of different races of human beings gathered together inside the court yard. As for the town, a description of it would be time thrown away; it is merely a mass of dirty heaps of mud bricks, straw and filth. Having procured a passage in a government steamer, I reluctantly left all friends at Kotree, and away we proceeded up the country; on reaching Sewan, the steamer was fastened to the bank all night, as she required a fresh supply of fuel; all being made fast, the commander and I disembarked to enjoy an evening stroll. After wandering about for some time, a native volunteered to shew us the caged tiger, and after wading through an immense number of dirty streets and alleys, we arrived

at a Faker's abode, who it seemed had charge of the animal; opening a door, we soon had a good view of the noble brute, but he evidently was displeased at the intrusion of his pale-faced visitors. The keeper declared that government allowed him forty rupees per mensem for subsistence allowance. During the evening we were requested to witness a nautch; never having been present at a native dance, the invitation was willingly accepted, and we hastened to the ball-room. On entering this apartment, which was badly lighted up with mustard oil, we discovered that the evening's entertainments had commenced; seating ourselves upon a sort of divan, we took a hasty survey of the company, the host in the mean time being busily engaged with his rose water, which he lavishly sprinkled over all his guests. This ceremony of welcome ended, dancing girls made their appearance, attended by three or four dirty looking musicians. For an Englishman, five minutes attendance is sufficient; the performance after that period becomes irksome and uninteresting, unless he happens to be a tolerable linguist; and though he should be perfectly acquainted with the language, the fumes of the oil, and the heated atmosphere of the room, cannot be agreeable. The women appear to execute all their dances alike, at least I could discover no difference between one dance and another. Brass, gold, or silver

bracelets were clasped round their ancles, from which were suspended several diminutive bells. In dancing the ancles were shuffled together, which produced most discordant sounds; the dancer at the same time indulging the audience with a few vocal strains. During the ballet performances, fruits, and a variety of sweetmeats are handed round to the guests, who, moreover, are continually being saturated with most delicious and pure rose water, far superior to any usually sold as such. At intervals, the vocalists on bended knees supplicate the guests for "buksheesh," or present. This word acts like magic, in the East; you may stand parleying before a Nigger fully half the day, and he pretends not to understand you, but mention buksheesh, and the fellow immediately comprehends your meaning, even were you to speak Greek to him.

When hunting in the jungles, I have often required a draught of water, or a lighted stick for my cheroot, and on asking a man to bring what I needed, the stupid fellow would stand stock still, with eyes wide open, and remain in this position several minutes, repeating my words all the time; but the simple word, buksheesh, not only brought him to his senses, but brought me what I had asked for. Having taken in three days fuel, early next morning we quitted Sewan; the banks of the river were very picturesque, but we passed no

large towns, though several villages were scattered along the shore; the passage was becoming tedious, when the pilot pointed out to me the nearest ghat to Larkanah, which was my present destination. Here then I resolved to disembark; and as the steamer approached the bank, we perceived several natives assembled, anxiously awaiting our arrival; shortly after two Europeans came along side; in one of whom I had the pleasure of recognizing my brother; fortunately he had been on one of his sporting excursions, and he was returning home, when intelligence reached him that a steamer might shortly be expected to pass Larkanah, and having heard of my departure from Kotree, by river route, he considered it probable that I might have engaged a passage in her. For a period of two years I remained with him in Scinde, and not being engaged in any official occupation, the whole of my spare time was devoted to the study of Scindee, and to the obtaining information relative to the country, and its inhabitants. Having always been passionately addicted to field sports, I took every opportunity for indulging in this manly pastime, and during my shooting excursions, managed to collect various matter, which with the reader's permission, I will now place before him, after my own fashion.

CHAPTER III.

Towns in Upper Scinde—Larkanah—Fort Fitzgerald—Camel Corps—Amateur steam boat—Effects of the Sun—Attempted Murder—Sukkur—Pullah Fishing.

The principal towns in Upper Scinde are Roree, Sukkur, Mer, Shikarpore, Khyrpore, and Larkanah. At the latter town I spent a year, and consider it the prettiest cantonment in Scinde. The head quarters of the Scinde Camel Corps, formerly rested here, and the energetic commanding officer, Captain F——, erected a fort about a mile from the town. The interior of the fort was filled up with stables for the camels; the barracks were admirably constructed, and the whole building does Captain F—— great credit. The fort, I believe, has been called after its architect. Great care and attention were paid to the grooming of the animals, and as a matter of course, they always appeared in good working condition. The speed of many camels thus carefully groomed, frequently astonished us, and in a few cases, even a horse could not outstrip them. Half

of the sepoys attached to the regiment were accoutred like the regular cavalry, and the remainder like the infantry. The former on the march were seated in front, and performed the functions of drivers, whilst the infantry man, musket in hand, took up his position in the rear. These camels have been known to achieve a march of eighty miles in twenty-four hours, and on arriving at the end of their journey, a regiment consisting of four hundred men, was prepared to take the field against the enemy. I do not remember ever having heard the annual sum expended by government, in the maintenance of this corps, but it may be doubted whether the cost of the above establishment exceeds that of a regular cavalry regiment. For an extensive frontier the camel corps would prove highly serviceable, if kept in an efficient state. The officer's houses are ranged along the banks of the Larkanah canal, and all the residents priding themselves upon their agricultural pursuits, large gardens were soon flourishing around their respective domiciles. As the canal for more than six months of the year, remained dry, wells had to be excavated for supplying the gardens with water, their cost varying according to the mode of construction; for instance, a pukka, or burnt brick, well, could not be completed for less than two hundred and fifty rupees; whereas, digging a well, and not walling it, could be

performed for a mere trifle. All our gardens were surrounded by a shrubbery of castor oil trees, and so rapid is vegetation in this part of Scinde, that in a couple of years the plant arrived to a height of fifteen or sixteen feet. The soil of Upper Scinde is very favourable for plantains, which flourish luxuriantly in the Larkanah district. Pomegranates, likewise, are very common, and when in blossom, set off a garden wonderfully. Amongst other local reminiscences, the steamer built by Captain F——, deserves mention. Her dimensions were sixty feet over all, five in breadth, and four feet deep. The engines of ten horse power came direct from London. Many of the natives, inland, had never seen a steamer, and on hearing the noisy locomotive, their astonishment, as well as fright, baffles all description. Perhaps a couple of hundred villagers would assemble to witness our passage, when the sparks and ashes from the funnel, falling upon the naked shoulders of our sable spectators, created amongst them no little sensation. Those who suffered from the heated cinders, precipitated themselves headlong down the bank, like so many lunatics, upsetting all with whom they came in contact, leaving those who were entirely ignorant of the cause of this sudden panic, in a state of great consternation. We frequently enjoyed excursions in this steamer, the hospitable owner always providing an

admirable commissariat on these occasions. The last trip I made was in the month of June, perhaps the warmest month in the year; the grilling and blistering we all endured was fearful. Old Sol certainly took a greater dislike to me than the others, for after the second day's exposure, I could scarcely open my mouth, and my cheeks were blistered to such an extent, that for many days I had good cause to remember the fierce rays of a Scinde sun. Murders occasionally were committed in the Larkanah district, but the most determined and daring attempt at one, was perpetrated in the compound of our own house. It appeared during the trial, that two wealthy landholders, had been for some time back disputing about their territorial boundaries, and not being able to arrive at any satisfactory arrangement, one of the parties resolved to refer the dispute to the collector. The other Zemindar hearing of his opponent's intentions, immediately considered how he could get rid of him. At last an assassin was hired, and the wretch concealed himself in our stables. During the morning I visited the horses, and was returning to the house, when a great hubbub amongst the people made me turn round, and enquire the cause of the sudden uproar. But the cause was soon discovered, for a man with drawn sword in hand, was amusing himself by cutting and hacking the unfortunate landholder, who,

surrounded by his friends, had seated himself under a mango tree, quietly awaiting the perusal of his petition. The cowardly ruffian was at last secured, and dragged by the hairs of his head into the presence of the collector; the mob kicking him in the face until the miserable man was perfectly saturated with blood. His intended victim survived the cowardly act, and the assassin, though condemned to death, had the sentence commuted to banishment for life. Strange to say, the culprit and myself were in the stable together, not a minute previous to the attack, he concealing himself under a heap of grass, some of which I inspected, in order to ascertain if it was fresh and good enough for the horses.

The greatest luxury we enjoyed at Larkanah, was a bath, sixty feet long, forty broad, and twelve deep. The reader can imagine the pleasure of a plunge into such a delicious pool, when the thermometer in the shade rose to 99°, and sometimes much higher. The water coming out of a well, was at all times of the day excessively cold, and Persian wheels conveyed the limpid stream into the bath. Having received an invitation to visit Meer, we soon completed all necessary arrangements. The distance from Larkanah is about fifty-three miles, and the road all along was in tolerable condition, owing to a clever device on the part of the deputy collector, at Meer. This officer had

lately purchased a new buggy, and he intimated to the Kardars, and head people of the district, that every time his conveyance jolted on the public road, a fine of one rupee would be imposed upon the head man who had charge of that part of the road where the jolt took place. This threat being rigidly carried out, soon produced the desired effect; not a hole was visible, and the bridges constructed over water courses and canals, were always in excellent repair. Half way betwixt Larkanah and Meer, a large village is passed, but the country presents no attractions for the traveller. Jhow trees alone are observable, except in the vicinity of a jungle village; when, perchance, some small mango and peepul trees make their appearance. Meer is not equal to Larkanah, either in extent or population, nevertheless it is a large and flourishing town, carrying on a great flax trade. The numerous mango plantations in the neighbourhood of the city, are famous for their superior description of fruit. This is partly attributed to their proximity to the canal, which passes the town, and no doubt vastly improves the richness of the soil. Hog and deer abound in this district, but the dense jungle does not admit of much sport, at least, with the spear. During our stay, the collector received one of Carson's patent salting machines, and like all Indians, whenever a new invention reaches them from home, we

none of us could rest contented, until a few experiments had taken place, to test the efficacy of the machine;—a sheep constituted the first subject, and the success attending our united exertions was greater than we had anticipated, for the meat continued in a wholesome condition for three days; and this, be it remembered, during the hot weather of Scinde. The result of our experiments proving so favourable, we resolved to make up a party, with the avowed determination of shooting and salting the entire race of wild hog inhabiting the jungle; but, from some cause or other, the expedition was daily deferred, until eventually the idea was given up altogether; and the pigs we salted in imagination, are, no doubt, at the present moment alive, and in a perfect state of salubrity, quite at the service of any salting speculator. Having occasion to proceed to Shikarpore, my brother and myself put in order our travelling equipments, and soon arrived at the largest and most important city in Upper Scinde. Two regiments of native infantry, and a troop of artillery, are stationed here; but the cantonment itself was a perfect purgatory. During the months of June, July, August, and September, the hot winds, dust, and sand storms uniting together, spread devastation all around, rendering the cantonments scarcely bearable. The situation is exposed on all sides to the fury of the

elements; and, therefore, those who are acquainted with the nature of a Scinde dust storm, can form an opinion as to the pleasure of residing in such a place so dreadfully open to the winds. I will endeavour, for the sake of the English reader, to describe the wonderful phenomenon of a dust storm. When first visible on the horizon, it resembles a dark thunder cloud; this increases in size, and approaches so rapidly, that frequently there is scarcely time to allow the inmates of a dwelling to close the doors, ere, with a stupendous fury it rushes through every room, loading the furniture with dust, and blinding those who are within; and even when the doors and windows are, to all appearance, effectually secured, still it is impossible to prevent the small particles of sand from intruding, wherever a chink or crevice, no matter how small, presents itself. Darkness resembling night prevails during the continuance of the storm, and the wretched inmate has only one alternative, that is, to remain passive, with his hands before him, until the mad career of the hurricane has somewhat subsided. After a severe sand storm, a few drops of rain fall, which is a signal for throwing open all your doors; every menial attached to the establishment is summoned, books, articles of furniture, have all to be dusted separately, the carpet has to be taken up, and in fact, the greatest con-

fusion prevails in the house The bath, and clean linen, come into requisition, besides a variety of other arrangements, which, perhaps, will occupy a couple of hours; and by this time your house may possibly once more become habitable. What would the London or Parisian dandy think of such a visitation? Or how would they act under such circumstances? particularly if with well-maccassared hair, and dressed in tip top style, they were about entering their carriage, en route to an evening party. Or suppose an old alderman with his turtle soup before him; only fancy how disgusted he would feel at being obliged to send his plate away untasted, on account of the quantity of sand that had fallen therein; why, a gouty general's anger would be quite a zephyr in comparison to that of the alderman's! The city of Shikarpore contains nearly 35,000 inhabitants, the greater portion consisting of Hindoos, who may be said to carry on all the commercial transactions connected with this wealthy city. The streets are narrow and dirty, even the principal bazaar, extending a mile and a half long, is not to be compared to some of the dirty London allies. So poor and abject an appearance does it present, that in traversing its streets, no casual traveller would for a second imagine that Shikarpore contained the vast wealth that rumour ascribes to it. When I visited the town, small-pox was

raging furiously, and the number of dead bodies continually being carried through the streets for interment, certainly did not add to the attractions of the place. The soil round Shikarpore is rich; consequently, wheat, rice, and sugar, are extensively cultivated during the inundations, which usually commence in May. The Shikarpore gardens are worthy of notice, though they are laid out according to native taste; mangos, pomgranates, apricots, and apple trees, being planted indiscriminately together; flowers, with the exception of inferior rose trees, were rare in these gardens. It was in one of these plantations that the collector of Upper Scinde gave a pic nic to the station. Early after breakfast did all the guests repair to the appointed garden, wherein tents were pitched, targets were erected for sporting characters, and every species of amusement that could be devised, did the worthy host afford his guests. During the day, a couple of bands attended, and the mango groves resounded with martial strains. One or two groups might be seen seated under the shade of a banyan tree, anxiously observing a snake charmer exercise his mysterious art; whilst one or two grey-haired veterans smilingly looked on, and discussed the merits of cheroots and brandy pawnee. Sukkur was my next place of abode, and is distant from Shikarpore about twenty-five miles. The road between the

above named cities, as well as the greater portion of the surrounding country, is covered with water during the inundations. Boats are then brought into requisition, and may be seen plying amongst the jungle trees, or over fields under cultivation. Sukkur was a ruined city, entire streets of houses having fallen to decay, several even levelled to their foundations, presenting unsightly gaps in all directions of the town, and giving it a most dilapidated and desolate appearance. Since the arrival of the British Sukkur has undergone many improvements; a large bazaar has sprung up on the bank of the river, and, no doubt, eventually the town itself will again acquire some importance, though its beauty and prosperity can never be equal to what it was in former days.

The musjids, buildings and lofty minarets, must have been constructed by a far superior race to the Scindes. Let the traveller inspect the miserable little mud hovels tenanted by the present race, then let him turn to the adjacent glazed edifices, and readily will he admit that the latter were erected by superior architects. The largest minaret, towers some 100 feet high, the workmanship is beautiful, the building externally and internally being magnificently ornamented with porcelain tiles. Sukkur is built upon a ridge of low hills, composed of flint and limestone. That it is an unhealthy

locality, the numerous graveyards sufficiently testify. Two European cemetries may be seen, both crowded with the brave; but who can wonder at this fearful mortality when the heat is so oppressive? Luckily, during January and February, frost, a truly welcome guest appears on the ground; fires at this period of the year are often required during the early part of the mornings and late at night. These two bracing months perform wonders with the European constitution, and enable many to endure the heat for the rest of the year. Date trees cover the banks of the river, but owing to the soil, few large mango trees are to be met with near Sukkur, except on the opposite bank of the Indus. Few of the fish caught in this river are worth eating; they possess little flavour, and an inconvenient quantity of bones. The "pullah" or Indian salmon, however, amply compensates for the poorer species; but even this delicious fish loses half its value, on account of its osseous nature, so that a ravenous epicure should be careful how he devours the tit bits, tantalizing though it may be. Some have not the patience to separate the bones from the meat, but collect the roes and fabricate them into a variety of palatable dishes. A roe curry, such as Bombay people alone can make, is a perfect luxury, and worthy of being placed on a regal table. The singular method employed in catching these fish

may amuse the reader. The adventurous fisherman's boat consists of a large earthenware pot, capable of containing eight or ten gallons, having at one end an orifice about four inches in diameter, which of course is uppermost when launched. Over this hole the fisherman horizontally places his stomach, so as to prevent the water from entering the vessel; his legs are free, dangling in the stream, and are converted into paddles for either steering or propelling the boat. The net which is made of very fine though strong material, assumes a triangular shape, and is attached to a long bamboo stick. Notwithstanding the velocity of the current, the fisherman boldly launches out into the very centre of the river, when dropping his net into the water, and firmly seizing the bamboo with both hands, he carefully commences his avocation. Often and often have I anxiously watched the operations of these men, and trembled for their safety, on beholding them whirling round and round in the numerous eddies they so frequently encountered. Yet strange to say, accidents seldom if ever occured. So light are these frail barks, that when enough fish have been captured, the owner makes for the shore, and without any apparent exertion, lifts the boat upon his head, and in this fashion proceeds homewards.

CHAPTER IV.

Pig sticking—Roree—Bukkur—Faqueers Island—Legend of the Merchant's fair daughter—Khyrpore—Ali Morad—Wild Fowl Shooting—Productions of Scinde—Festivities at Sukkur.

Those were indeed merry days, when the gallant ——, Bombay, N.I. Regiment was stationed at Sukker. The officers attached to this corps consisted of as hospitable a set of fellows as ever drew swords. Not a man, even from the commanding officer downwards, that did not glory and love to see "the wild boar die." Small parties were frequently formed to hunt the tiger in his own lair, and that too on foot, elephants not being procurable. Pig-sticking is one of the noblest sports in India; even as these lines are being penned, fancy raises before me the excited throng of horsemen, nearly all mounted upon fiery little Arabian steeds, spear in hand, waiting impatiently outside the jungle for the wild boar's charge; three or four hundred men, assisted by numerous dogs of all descriptions, have already com-

menced beating up the quarters of the jungle, for our hunters, who aspire to nobler game, permit the deer, jackals, and foxes, to rush unheeded by; Anon the cries and noise produced by men and dogs, become more audible, nearer, still nearer, they approach. The pig-stickers who, with almost maddening excitement, are anxiously expecting the charge, strain every muscle of the eye, as they watch the slightest waving of the tall grass, or hear the slightest crackling in the thicket. With what an indescribable sensation does each heart palpitate, until the enemy makes his appearance; one and all raise a loud shout, and for a time no one speaks, as the boar is fiercely, madly pursued by the hunters; tremendous is the pace for the first half mile, when perhaps the boar suddenly turns round, his diminutive grey eye savagely twinkling at his opponents, uncertain who shall first taste his anger. Short is the time allowed him for cogitation; a moment longer, and behold yonder daring horseman, together with his steed, are rolling on the field. Quick as thought, another rider takes advantage of the moment, and plants a spear very gently in the back of the boar. The ice once broken, spear after spear follows in rapid succession, but the foe has no intention of tamely yielding up his life; he likewise watches his opportunity, and singles out another of his tormentors, whose horse swerving

through terror, offers too tempting a chance for the hog, who forthwith rushes savagely at the steed, ripping it up, and bringing horse and rider to the ground. But still the odds are fearfully against him; vain are his efforts to gain a neighbouring slip of jungle, loss of blood deteriorates from his speed, and again he is obliged to face his pursuers: with blood-shot eye and foaming mouth he makes a fresh attack, which is repulsed by some experienced hand; raising himself with difficulty and pain, again he flies at one of his foes, and again is vanquished; slowly he sinks down, willing even yet to make a charge if it were possible, until finally he gloriously bites the dust, dying game to the last.

Roree is a large town opposite to Sukkur, and its appearance from the latter city is exceedingly picturesque. The town is built upon a ridge of hills, rising abruptly from the water's edge, so that the lower houses appear to overhang the river; the best Scinde silks are to be procured here, the manufacture of which is curious, though primitive. After the inundations very ancient coins are picked up by boys and idlers, who search for them in the vicinity of Roree. My brother succeeded in obtaining a few specimens of them, and they proved to be Græco Bactrian remains.

Roree is noted for its luxuriant gardens, containing large groves of date and mango trees; the former, during

the fruit season, are invaluable to the poorer inhabitants, who subsist almost entirely upon dates for three or four months in the year. A very holy relic of their Prophet is deposited in one of the Roree Musjids, the priest who has charge, persists in asserting that the hair he presents for inspection, was actually taken from the Prophet's upper lip; be this as it may, thousands of people from all parts of India yearly visit the relic, and many offerings are made to the presiding priest; the hair is carefully enclosed in a gold box, a religious gift from Ali Morad, the Khyrpoor Ameer, and is only exposed to the gaze of the faithful once a year.

In the centre of the river, between Sukkur and Roree, lies the small island of Bukkur; upon which stands a fort evidently built some years ago; it is capable of containing a garrison five or six thousand strong; that is, if barracks were erected, and though, at the present day its walls are in a dilapidated state, still it is sufficiently serviceable for government purposes; having been converted into an arsenal. Formerly a subaltern officer remained on duty a whole fortnight, inside the fort, and a tedious life it was, until the relief came and released him from his prison. This fort must originally have been considered impregnable, for the river rushes past the island on both sides, with the force of a cataract, whilst the foundation consists of solid rock, so

that for a native army to effect a landing by means of their country boats, would not only be exceedingly difficult, but dangerous; the very steamers are occasionally detained a day or two at Sukkur, during the height of the inundations, unable to make head against the stream; sometimes they are obliged to obtain the assistance of about four hundred men to tow them up past the island, the engines all the time working at full power. Just about a stone's throw above Bukkur is a much smaller island, upon which a religious mendicant took up his abode many years ago; and his descendants reside there at the present day. A neat little temple, entirely concealed by foilage, has been erected on this spot, and dedicated to the river deity. Once a year pilgrims of both religions, (Mahometan and Hindoo) flock to the shrine; and a gay scene lasts for three days. The river literally swarms with human beings, and the ferry-boats, which pay government a high price for these three days only, have ample employment. The priests, of course, narrate their favorite legend to the credulous mass of pilgrims, and as far as I can remember it, the reader, if it so please him, shall hear it too. Many years ago, a rich merchant was travelling through Scinde in company with his only daughter, a young lady of surpassing beauty, and possessing very superior attainments; in fact, her reputation spread

with the rapidity of lightning, far and wide, insomuch that the sun turned fiery red with rage, whilst the moon became pale with envy. No wonder, then, that if celestial bodies noticed her accomplishments, a poor weak minded mortal should be seized with admiration. Tidings of her approach were swiftly conveyed to the ears of one of the Scinde princes, and discovering that she would shortly pass through his dominions, this unfeeling monster resolved to seize her. But Allah is good, and protects the weak. The base intentions of the prince were communicated to the merchant, and he, procuring a boat, took to flight. The retainers of the prince hastily pursued the terrified fugitives, and rapidly gained upon them. The Roree prince was fortunately at enmity with the oppressor of the merchant; but alas! the river in those days, flowed not underneath the walls of Roree. The merchant was in despair, he already beheld his daughter in the licentious embraces of a profligate prince, whilst he himself was hurried off to some darksome dungeon. Finally, as a last resource, although it should have been his first, he besought the Deity to turn the course of the river. The indulgent God not only heard, but granted his supplication, for immediately the waters deviated from their natural course, and flowed towards Roree; and upon the island opposite that city, the merchant, with his lovely

daughter, were safely cast. So great was the merchant's gratitude for the divine assistance, that he immediately erected a temple, and dedicated it to his preserver; immense sums of money were distributed amongst the poor, and his only daughter he consigned to the waves of the Indus, as a propitious offering to the God himself. On the other side of the fort may be seen another, and the smallest island of the group. When the inundations are at their height, this last mentioned isle is nearly covered with water, but government has converted it into a coal depôt for the steamers; the reader exclaims—what a contrast! one island a romantic abode, the other a dirty coal-hole. Ali Morad, the only Scinde prince who possessed any territory in the country, after the British annexed it to their own dominions, resided at Khyrpore, a large town situate about sixteen miles from Roree. The streets and houses are as usual disgustingly dirty, and badly built; dead animals are allowed to remain for days in public thoroughfares, consequently the stench is abominable; Ali Morad may be considered a splendid representative of all Eastern tyrants, his poorer subjects are grossly oppressed, and shamefully maltreated; but the unfeeling man never considers the wants of his subjects, and provided the treasury can afford means sufficient to enable him to gratify his tastes, little does Ali Morad care for either

the prosperity of the country or its people; with such a ruler, who can be astonished that the country possesses neither wealth, trade, nor happiness. The principal fort, Deja Kote, would not require much shelling to bring the besieged to their senses.

In the vicinity of Khyrpore, Ali Morad possesses several shooting preserves, but so jealous is the Ameer of his game, that Europeans seldom obtained permission to shoot or hunt over them, unless the prince himself accompanied the party; and on these occasions the old scamp always contrived to have the first shot at the animals as they fled past; and to do his highness justice, it must be owned that a better shot never handled a rifle. One day the Ameer invited a few of us to accompany him on a shooting excursion, but with respect to sport, it consisted of animals driven so close up to us, that it was downright butchery, and afforded no amusement; a real English sportsman scouts the very idea of game being driven up to him, he prefers to give, at least, fair play to his prey; but Ali Morad not being fortunate enough to belong to "that land that bears a wide known name," differed in opinion. The best part of the morning's amusements consisted of a splendid champagne breakfast, and we were all vastly diverted at the eccentricity of our host, who kept shooting, praying, eating, and drinking at alternate intervals; Mussulman

though he was, he never permitted the champagne bottle to pass untasted by him! His son, a fat punchy fellow of sixteen, used to be a drunken little scoundrel, and generally accompanied his father when he visited Sukkur. It was in the Khyrpore district that we met with a sugar-mill, and a more primitive machine could not well be imagined. The factor being present, we persuaded him to give us some information as to the manufacture of sugar.

It appeared from his account, that he only made an inferior sort of sugar, which the bunyiahs, or shop-keepers, purchased at a low price, and by some contrivance or other so improved it, how he could not tell, that it was well known that they made a handsome profit by the transaction; and our worthy informant ended the conversation by observing, that the process of refining the sugar adopted by the Hindoo bunyiah, was too troublesome for him. Here, indeed, was a fine specimen of an indolent Scindee.

We often visited a large jheel near Roree, it might be almost styled a lake; nor had we ever just cause to complain of the paucity of wild fowl shooting on its waters. When disturbed, clouds of birds would rise from amongst the weeds, jungle, and water-plants, so that even a very bad shot was enabled to bag as many as he pleased; we were all in those days as strong as young

elephants, our health unimpaired, and spirits as buoyant as corks; the scorching rays of the sun, the deadly climate of Scinde, were alike nought to us,—away we tramped, wading up to the waist in water, popping at and turning over the feathered race in quick succession. Look at yonder brahminee flying towards us, bang—bang, and with a splash, headlong he falls into the lake; and now we can obtain a closer inspection of his lovely plumage; how soft and clean his milk-white breast. But faith 'tis getting hot, so here, Mohammed, let us retreat to yonder bush, just verging on the margin of the Jheel, and there under its boughs we shall find grateful shelter.

Ah! 'tis well; now that we are all seated, hand us your wallet. No, not that, you stupid págal (foolish fellow), it is not powder and shot that is now required; hand us over the other one suspended from your kummerbund—good, now then examine the contents; a couple of cold ducks, a brace or two of teal, and a few slices of ham, the usual complement of bread and cheese, and in that little flask you will discover something a wee bit stronger than water; how one enjoys these sporting pic-nics, how pleasant the return home in the cool of the evening! But occasionally, instead of visiting our favourite jheel, we mounted our horses and hunted the jackal, or if fortunate, coursed a fox or

hare; true for you, dear reader, neither dogs nor foxes could equal dear England's breed in speed or bottom· What did that matter; we derived some amusement, though our pack consisted of a set of mongrel dogs. Near Sukkur, black and grey partridges are to be met with in abundance.

Young men should avoid too great exposure to the sun; many boast that nothing can ruin their constitution, they are able to endure all sorts of hardships; doubtless, such may indeed be the case at the commencement of their career, but eventually the climate and sun will assuredly do their work upon the system, if field sports are indulged in to excess. A very old and fortunate tiger hunter, not long since, had nearly fallen a victim to the power of the sun. Scinde has been very undeservedly abused, and that too by those who never visited the country, or knew anything connected with the inhabitants; those who have had an opportunity of inquiring into its merits and faults, frankly allow that justice has not been done to young Egypt; when once the public mind seizes hold of an idea, it is no facile task to eradicate it, no matter how erroneous or palpable the mistake. The soil extending along the banks of the Indus, formed of alluvial deposits is rich; and competent judges have pronounced the land to be extremely favourable for agricultural purposes, particularly for the

cultivation of sugar-cane, cotton, and indigo plants; but strange to say, that owing to the indolence and utter want of energy amongst the inhabitants, indigo and cotton are not so much cultivated as they ought to be, considering the fertility of the ground. If the zemindars could be induced to increase the cultivation of these plants, there could not be the slightest doubt of the produce realizing a handsome remuneration; a ready sale for both could always be obtained. Still more —should Kurrachee, as it is anticipated, become an important seaport town, the Scinde agriculturist would have great advantages over those cultivating indigo and cotton elsewhere, for the navigation of the Indus is open throughout the year; boat carriage is moderate, far less expensive than on the Ganges, and the passage, owing to the rapidity of the stream, occupies but a short time. When measures are adopted for irrigating the land, so that a constant supply of water may always be depended upon, then perhaps the wealthier land proprietors may feel disposed to speculate more liberally in indigo and cotton plantations.

The Scinde soil, as before remarked, is likewise favourable for the cultivation of the sugar-cane, which is grown in great abundance, and planters declare it to be equal quite to that of the West Indies. The mustard plant is extensively cultivated; every village through

which you pass has a few acres of mustard in its vicinity. The natives cultivate it for the sake of the oil extracted from it. Rice, wheat, tobacco, castor oil, and an endless variety of vegetables thrive well in young Egypt. But though the soil is so productive and vegetation so rapid, this fine country was thrown away when in possession of the Scindees, they being, without exception, the most indolent race on the face of the earth. Many are of opinion that their listlessness arises from the effects of the climate, but this is a question open to discussion; surely the constant use of the intoxicating baug, and frequent application to the hookah, amongst the poorer classes, at least, may be the probable causes of their slothful dispositions. I have remarked a carpenter pretending to be planing a board for half an hour; he will amuse himself by watching the passers by, then having run the plane once or twice along the wood, down goes the tool, and our hard-working friend prepares his hookah; ten minutes elapse, when he resumes his work, three or four shavings are with great exertion taken off the plank, and then the carpenter discovers it to be dinner time. This long repast having been concluded, he returns for his tools and shuts up shop for the day, performing in eight hours what an Englishman would have completed in as many minutes. This is no exaggeration; any one long resident in India would bear

testimony to the fact. Tailors are as bad, if not worse; for some snips, in order to make a more lucrative job, cut off the buttons from your trowsers, replace them, and in the most delicate manner send "master" a bill for the same. The bricklayers earnestly gaze at the brick for half an hour before they make up their minds to place it in position. With such a lazy set of fellows, how can one indulge in any sanguine hope as to their improvement being rapidly achieved? How is it possible to suppose that very gigantic steps can at first be taken towards raising them up the ladder of civilization? The Scindee is a fine tall and handsome man, with dark complexion, not gifted with an overplus of courage, though I must acknowledge to have met amongst them bold and daring characters, more especially amongst the Shikar Wallahs. The wealthier class are proud and haughty, polite to their equals, to European officers courteous and kind; superstitious in their ideas, and of very questionable morality.

The principal manufactures of Scinde are fine and coarse cloths, silks, rugs, cotton carpets, and earthenware; but it is much to be regretted that the beautiful art of glazing tiles has become extinct. The fruits of Scinde are not tempting; with the exception of one or two kinds, they possess but little flavour. The best are the mango, date, and plantain; limes of three or four

kinds, melons, and small green apples; the following may be obtained in abundance, but of such inferior quality, that few people consider them worth gathering: grapes, pomegranates, mulberries, peaches that never ripen, a small species of fig, and a horrible kind of cucumber. This latter, which should have come under the head of vegetables, is consumed in vast quantities by the poor, who suffer much from its excessive use. The domestic animals are the buffalo, horses, or rather ponies, cows, sheep, goats, dogs, donkeys; and last, though not least in importance, camels. The cows and horses are diminutive little creatures, but owing to the laborious duty imposed upon them by their masters, these ill-treated animals always appear miserably out of condition; the donkey comes in for his share of work, and a serviceable quadruped it is too; it is astonishing to see the immense burden they are made to carry. The Hindoos generally keep these animals, and the long journeys they undertake upon them are incredible. The camel is invaluable to a Scindee, who makes him generally useful; they draw water from wells for irrigating the soil, and with a bandage over the eyes, and a few leaves in his mouth, the patient creature perambulates round and round his narrow sphere of labour for several hours at a stretch. It costs but little to keep them, for their frugal diet they gather for

themselves hastily in passing through the jungle; with this, and a handful of grain once a day, they are enabled to sustain greater hardships, fatigues, and longer marches than any other animal; and so docile is their temper, that a child ten years of age may be seen entrusted with a string of twenty; the flesh of a young camel is accounted a great delicacy, but such a luxury is reserved for grand festivals alone; the meat has the flavour of veal, but not so tender.

The Scindee ladies mostly perform journeys upon the camel, a couple of hampers are slung across the back of the animal, into which the fair ones scramble, and a very comfortable conveyance it makes too. The wild animals inhabiting the jungles are, the tiger and cheetah; the former not so numerous now, owing to the deadly warfare waged against them by officers stationed in Scinde. The wild hog, deer of various kinds, including hog deer, afford capital sport to those who are well mounted. Hyænas, though remarkably shy, occasionally stumble across the huntsman's path, but few horses can overtake these brutes, who although getting over the ground in reality at a tremendous pace, appear only to amble quietly along. As for the jackals, they are a downright curse to a restless sleeper; travel in Scinde where duty or pleasure leads you; travel the wild deserts, or drop down the river in a boat, still

these howling creatures most perseveringly persist in following your track. During the day they keep their conversation to themselves, but as surely as the sun bids adieu to that part of the world, after having completed his daily tour of duty, so do these creatures commence their concert, which, without exception, is the most unearthly and infernal music mortal man was ever doomed to listen to; still they are useful, the jackal performs the scavenger's part to perfection. Foxes, hares, and even wolves, though not very common, are met with now and then; the latter were very troublesome in the neighbourhood of Shikarpore, where they committed sad havoc amongst the farm-yard stock. Otters about Sukkur and along the banks of large canals, you may observe at their piscatory pursuits every day; the natives tame them after a fashion, but if provoked they are extremely fierce, and then woe betide the offender, if the otter manages to obtain a grip of his leg between the teeth; the otter inflicts a most severe bite, and never quits his hold when once obtained. Small game, such as partridges, grey and painted quail and snipe, may be shot all over Upper Scinde; the grain and wheat fields are the best localities, but a low thin jhaw jungle, with patches of wet green grass scattered here and there, is a sure find, particularly if in the vicinity of a canal. The obára is the king of Scinde

game birds; ornithologists describe it as a species of ortis tardis; the cock equals in size a pea-hen, wearing on its head a magnificent plume of brilliantly coloured feathers, from three to five inches in length, the flesh is a great dainty, and always in great request among gourmands, who consider the obára the only palatable game bird in Scinde. Its habits are solitary; desert wastes and isolated spots are its favourite haunts; consequently, the sportsman has to toil hard if anxious to obtain a good bag. The Ameers trained up hawks for chasing them, and the princes being passionately fond of the sport, spent much of their time in hawking; some hawks are considered very valuable. Ali Morad had one in his possession, and the value he set upon it was 1,000 rupees. I was offered one for a gold mohur, but whether it would have been worth any thing or not I cannot tell, though at the same time I must say, some doubts arose in my own mind as to its being a hawk at all; it monstrously resembled a young kite. Many a happy hour have I spent in young Egypt, therefore would I be the last to pen even a line against the country; as to the injustice of annexing it to our dominions, that I leave alone,—for what opinion one individual may have formed as to the moral right we have to Scinde, is at the present day neither here nor there. All discussions upon this subject are now not

only futile, but an unnecessary waste of time; for, let it be granted that Government had decided upon re-instating the Ameers, such a measure could not be confirmed without inflicting great injustice upon the people, who, having enjoyed for a period of ten years the lenient rule of the British, would be compelled to endure the harsh and tyrannical one of the Ameers. During the late Punjab campaigns had not Scinde been in our possession we have every reason to suppose, that, in addition to the Seikh army, the British might have had to resist the attack of some 30,000 or 40,000 Belooch and Scinde warriors, who would, to use a very strong expression, play the very devil with the countries through which they passed. Our friend the Nawab of Bhawulpore would have been obliged to look about him; for this prince up to his death, which occurred only lately, always remained the firm and true ally of the British. So far the annexation of Scinde has proved very beneficial, but its bright day has yet to come, nor is that happy period, I trust, far distant. I shall conclude this chapter by describing a Scinde dancing party.

The "Illustrated London News," (an invaluable periodical to us poor Indian exiles) just arrived, contains an admirable engraving of the road to Epsom on the Derby day. The editor might have published at

the same time, the road from Sukkur to Shikarpore on the ball day. The 11th Bombay N. I. were the hosts on the occasion; we were honoured with the presence of no less than five ladies; in fact, they constituted the only representatives of the fair sex in Upper Scinde. Such a wonderful phenomenon had never previously taken place. The very idea of there being five live ladies in the country appeared extraordinary, and some even hinted that a few wags had borrowed feminine dresses, and had dared to pass themselves off as young ladies; however, this critical argument was at last settled, and it was ascertained beyond all doubt, that on the present festive occasion there were no less than five real ladies assembled at one time in the ball-room. One lady came a distance of sixty miles. All Shikarpore and Larkanah attended; but the road, reader, was the richest scene of all. There goes the old Major who has seen some thirty years tough service—twig the old gentleman—he is sporting on the occasion a white beaver hat, which he brought out with him from England when he first joined his regiment; age certainly has rather impaired the shape, and the nap has a tendency to brown. Then up gallops a griff, donning, as if in defiance of the Major, a bran new gossamer. His showy Arab bounds gracefully over the ground, whilst the young reprobate sings out as he flies past, "come along Major, haste to the

polka." Next comes a fellow without a coat, for be it remembered this scene took place in May. Another shambles along on a camel. Then a merry party of four come rolling along in a bullock cart, smoking cheroots at such an awful pace that any casual spectator might easily mistake the conveyance for a movable furnace, or a house on fire; but that the loud peals of laughter from within rectify the latter supposition. A few palanquins conveying the lazy set, bring up the rear. On, on they pass, until, as if by mutual consent, all assemble at a village half way. And now what a scene presents itself, every traveller having previously despatched his servant, a strange variety of human beings is gathered under the old spreading village pepul tree. What a popping of corks, and bless us, what a terrible display of eatables, which, however, rapidly disappear, although so much laughing and talking is going on. In the midst of the jungle dinner, the lady of the station is reported as having just arrived in a palkee; of course, she declines to alight, so three or four desperate ladies' men rush frantically about in search of sandwiches and a clean wine glass, upsetting everybody and everything in their haste to win the first smile. The old Major has taken off his hat and coat, and persists in requesting energetically some "youngster" to hand him up certain dishes and

bottles containing wine; the cravings of nature having been somewhat appeased, the route is again resumed, until one by one, the whole party arrive at Sukkur. As for the ball, it was admirably conducted, and went off in grand style. Those, and there were many, who could not obtain partners, were well amused in watching some newly taught Polka dancer, or in criticising the couples. Such an unusual scene of gaiety disturbed poor sober Sukkur, and afforded talk and scandal for the rest of the hot weather, or at least, until the enactment of the sad Mooltan tragedy.

CHAPTER V.

MOOLTAN.

Intelligence of the death of Vans Agnew, and Anderson, reaches Sukkur—Steamer with 200 privates on board starts up the river—Another steamer proceeds to Mooltan—Ooch—The Kardar, and his cavalcade—Ahmedpore—Hospitality of the Nawab.

When intelligence reached Sukkur that our poor countrymen, Vans Agnew and Anderson, had been treacherously murdered at Mooltan, the greatest excitement pervaded all classes of society, European and native. Vague and hurried accounts of the tragedy were circulated through the bazaars, but all were stamped with such palpable exaggerations, that few placed any confidence in them. Those reports which came direct from the Nawab of Bhawulpore could alone be depended upon. The European residents constantly visited each other's houses in quest of information, and all expressed their hatred and detestation of the in-

stigator of the cowardly murder; loud were the cries for vengeance, bitter the curses hurled against Moolraj. But as yet, several doubted whether Moolraj were in reality the instigator, and considered it highly probable, that the disturbance originated in the machinations of a few fanatics. These suppositions, however, soon fell to the ground, when certain tidings arrived that Moolraj had not only retired within his fort, but was busily engaged in raising his army, and collecting vast supplies for its support. Shortly after, the news of Edwardes's first victory reached Sukkur, and then all doubts as to Moolraj's participation in the late murder vanished instanter. Two hundred privates from a Bombay regiment were dispatched some distance up the river, but immediately returned.

Not having any official duties to perform, I resolved upon joining Lieutenant Edwardes's force forthwith. As a steamer was about proceeding towards Ooch, I availed myself of the opportunity, and engaged a passage in her for part of the distance. The engineers fortunately obtained an ample supply of fuel for the boat, but the wood being in too green a state, steam could not always be kept up to full power. Nothing worthy of remark occurred until the steamer arrived at a ghat, within five miles of Ooch, a large city in the Nawab of Bhawulpore's dominions. Here it was that I resolved to dis-

embark, and prosecute the remainder of my journey on land. I was provided with a letter of introduction to his highness, the Nawab, requesting that prince to assist me in joining Edwardes's camp. A son of the Vakeel's offered his services, which, in lieu of better, were accepted, but on arriving at Ahmedpore, that gallant youth having received innumerable presents from the Nawab, deemed it advisable to return home, instead of proceeding to the wars.

The steamer, on reaching the Ghât, only remained there for five minutes, just to enable myself and traps to tumble on shore; when once more the paddles revolved, and I was left behind. I kept my eye on the retreating steamer for some time, until a sudden bend of the river concealed all but the dark smoke from my gaze.

The position I was thus suddenly placed in, vividly recalled sundry anecdotes, and descriptions of ship-wrecked mariners, or men left on a desolate island by mutinous seamen. The story of Sinbad the sailor, perused in juvenile days, flashed before me in bold relief; even the picture of the cocoa-nut trees, bearing fruit twice the size of Sinbad himself, rose up in front of me. My reverie was not permitted to continue very long; in fact, it was disturbed by a showily dressed gentleman, very corpulent, and armed to the teeth,

who informed me that all was "tyar," Anglicised "ready," and requested that I would be pleased to issue orders.

Turning round, I perceived a numerous and well accoutred body-guard in attendance. They were all dressed in a showy style, and armed like their leader, from head to foot. Many carried spears, but appeared to be unacquainted with their use; and it seemed to me that the owners regarded these long weapons as great incumbrances.

The head man of the party was the Kardar of Ooch. An attendant held a magnificent white horse, splendidly caparisoned, and which the Kardar informed me, had been sent by the Nawab, for my own particular use. The saddle, bridle, and trappings, reminded one of the equestrian furniture used in Henry the Eighth's reign; that is to say, if we may place any confidence in the penny pictures hawked about by itinerant book-sellers. Both saddle and bridle were mounted most extravagantly with gold and silver ornaments, which might have proved too great a temptation for a needy soldier; as it was a very sordid speculation flitted across my brain, as to whether fortune would be so propitious as to allow me to capture in action an equally valuable concern. The traps borne by a camel had started, to

use a nautical phrase, "in quarter less no time," so we prepared to follow. Like the Scindee noblemen, my new acquaintances considered it beneath their dignity to gallop across country, deeming it more consistent to make their nags amble and prance in a stately manner; thereby showing off their horsemanship. For a while I accommodated myself to their pace, and passively endured this horrid jog-trot; my annoyance being considerably increased by the sharpness of the native saddle. Where is the Englishman who would for any time submit patiently to having his stomach turned inside out, by this dreadfully slow mode of travelling, rendered more provoking by the knowledge that a good piece of horse-flesh was thus ambling under him. He must have been more than mortal, who could have stood this purgatory longer than I did. At last becoming rather vicious, as it were, I bestowed a hearty dig into the horse's flanks, and the noble animal, no doubt unaccustomed to such harsh treatment, gave one or two bounds, then darted off like an arrow. The horse was really an excellent bit of blood, so I could not refrain from telling the Kardar, that it was positively infamous to teach such a "chunga ghora" to amble and dance, as if he were destined for the circus.

We were not long in reaching Ooch, but night ap-

proaching, the Kardar requested me to partake of his hospitality, which was accepted, of course.

The Nawab was residing at Ahmedpore, a large city, and the seat of government, distant from Ooch about twenty-two miles; consequently, it was impossible to arrive there that night, in time for a reception; so it was determined that we should start for Ahmedpore early the next morning.

On entering Ooch, nearly all the population, consisting of some 12,000 inhabitants, were perceived lining the streets, in order to witness the arrival of a Feringhee. The cavalcade were puffing and blowing like a bevy of young grampus whales, nor did they seem to relish their late unusual canter across country. Some with disarranged prygrics were endeavouring to set them right again; others had lost their shoes, and to tell the truth, the whole batch of warriors resembled a party hotly pursued by the foe. As for the poor old corpulent Kardar, he brought up the rear, looking the very picture of distress; never shall I forget his ghastly smile, when requested to point out the road leading to my abode for the night. Having formed up into something like order we again advanced, though at a walk; the spectators saláamed, the escort puffed, grunted, and coughed, whilst I could scarcely

keep my countenance whenever I met the Kardar's look of utter misery. Nothing could exceed our gracious reception, the Ooch people observing a degree of decorum perfectly astonishing; and far preferable to a London mob, who seldom refrain from hurraing, or screaming, whenever the slightest opportunity occurs for indulging in such noisy demonstrations either of welcome or disapprobation. As we passed through the crowded streets scarcely a word was uttered, with the exception of now and then a little flattery, such as, by Allah he rides well; oh, won't the Sikhs make a bolt of it when the Sahib displays the light of his countenance. Ah, the war is over now—who would be so injudicious as to molest this Sahib. I merely remark, én parenthesis, that when this latter observation reached my ears, I most sincerely trusted that nobody would molest me whilst on the road to Edwardes's camp. Well, all this polite bowing, scraping, and passing of compliments was, no doubt, exceedingly kind and agreeable, but our friend the Kardar appeared ill at ease; until at last, he gently intimated, that it would have been more becoming the dignity of his Prince's friend, had I entered the bazaar in a statelier manner, instead of dashing along the road as if charging Moolraj's cavalry.

The vakeel's son, who accompanied me from Sukkur,

reminded me that we were no longer in Scinde, but in Bhawulpore. I detested this vakeel's son from the first; he was always pretending to pray, except when busily engaged at his meals, and when a Mussulman incessantly continues at his devotions, you may safely reckon him a hypocrite. The reader will perhaps excuse this slight digression, and inspect our nocturnal residence. The building had certainly a very gloomy aspect, but the weather being warm, a couch at my own request had been prepared upon the roof, with the clear blue sky for a canopy. Preparatory to retiring for the night, a first-rate native dinner was discussed with great gusto, after which, it being yet early, I seated myself in the verandah, and enjoyed a cheroot. In the mean time, all the cavalcade had dismounted, and were now congregated in a circle within five yards of myself, where they kept up an indiscriminate and noisy conversation. For a short time, I listened to the chit chat going on, and occasionally the topic of conversation turned upon their late rough canter, which a few considered an admirable joke, whilst some of the wits of the assembly, ventured to offer a few facetious remarks, as to the Kardar's weight for a race.

Presently the Mooltan outbreak by degrees became the most prominent subject; but in discussing the question, they spoke all at the same time, and so

rapidly, that it was almost impossible to comprehend their meaning, though one could detect frequent mention of the names of Edwardes and Lake. The latter none could pronounce properly, but invariably called him Lack Sahib.

Joining the convivial party, who kept up a regular hubble bubble fire with their hookahs, a country-made chair was placed at my disposal, and in order to keep up a lively conversation, I put a variety of common place questions, and endeavoured to obtain as much information as possible, relative to Mooltan and its defenders. Not being thoroughly acquainted with their language, possibly my questions were unintelligible, for whenever I spoke they merely nodded their heads, and enquired in their turn, when the Bombay troops would arrive? What was my opinion of the row? besides a multitude of other interrogatories. They had evidently received intelligence of the 200 men who were foolishly dispatched from Sukkur in the steamer. These men only proceeded a short way, and were immediately recalled, which no doubt induced my friends to ask "when the Bombay troops would arrive?" We continued laughing and talking till near midnight, when all adjourned to rest. After mounting a horribly rotten ladder, which, during my ascent, shook like an aspen leaf, the house top was gained, when to my surprise I

beheld the vakeel's son sound asleep, the lazy dog; although so late, still upwards of five or six natives were smoking their hookahs, and no doubt discussing some topic of vital importance. Once upon my couch, I soon followed the example of the vakeel's son; next morning at day-break the Kardar, himself, came to intimate that it was time to commence preparations for starting. How the old gentleman contrived to climb up the ricketty ladder, appeared a mystery to me. He laughed heartily at the scene that had occurred the previous evening, and felt highly honoured as well as delighted, when assured that such an unbecoming "tomasha" should not again take place. Morning ablutions were performed on the house-top, and it was curious to observe how anxiously the attendants watched the process of a Feringhee immersing his hands and face in water. It would have been useless and impolitic to have resented their curiosity, or to appear offended at their remarks. No doubt they considered me in the light of some strange animal exposed for their inspection.

Taking all things into consideration, I deemed it advisable to perform my toilet with as much ease as if in a private apartment. Knowing the Kardar's objection to rapid travelling, a plan was suggested, as I thought, likely to suit the convenience of all parties. It was proposed that the Kardar and remainder of his suite

should precede me, leaving only a couple of horsemen to point out the road. Thus having allowed the advance party a good start ahead, I and the guides would overtake them, and we all could enter the bazaar of Ahmedpore together. The Kardar and retinue refused to listen to such an arrangement, and declared that the idea was preposterous in the extreme. "Suppose, said the Kardar, you were waylaid; suppose you were murdered on the road; what would the Nawab say? What would your servant's life be worth in the event of such a catastrophe? If (which Allah forbid) you came to an untimely end, what would the people say? Why, that the Sahib was proceeding on a visit to his Highness the Nawab of the Dardpoutra's, under the protection of the Kardar of Ooch, who treacherously deserted him; and some infidels were permitted to take his life. No, Sahib, the times are dangerous."

Everybody present sided with the Kardar, all raising some objection, so I was about surrendering at discretion, when a happy thought came to my rescue, and I resolved upon making one final effort. Well, Kardar, what does it matter, our journey after all will only occupy an hour and a half. My words went through the party like an electric shock, all eyes were fixed upon me, evincing no slight astonishment. At length the fat Kardar contrived to gasp out, "why my Lord

it's twenty miles to Ahmedpore. Never mind, I replied, that's only ten miles an hour, our horses are in admirable condition, the whole cavalcade are provided with excellent nags, so, after all, a sharp gallop will quickly transfer us from Ooch to Ahmedpore. During this conversation, with the greatest difficulty I preserved a composed and serious countenance, but two or three impudent fellows in the rear commenced grinning like mad, nor could I make them desist with all my gesticulations and winks. These Bhawulpore gentlemen, like the Scindees, love to have their own way if they can, but in the present case, the Kardar was compelled to give in; for having held a consultation with his suite, he reluctantly agreed to the proposition, and accompanied by his followers, rode on in advance. The morning being deliciously cool and pleasant, I enjoyed an hour's recreation in the neighbouring gardens, and likewise a stroll through the city, which, owing to the early hour, reposed in unruffled peace. Scarcely any of the inhabitants were perambulating the streets, so we fortunately escaped the intolerable nuisance of being attended by a crowd. Many of the shopkeepers, finding their interior sleeping apartments too warm, had placed their beds under the exposed verandah. Occasionally as we passed, some restless sleeper would peep from underneath his blanket, and having satisfied him-

self by taking a long stare at the strangers, either once more composed himself for sleep, or sought comfort from his hookah. Ooch, according to the native traditions, is a very ancient city, of some nine hundred years standing; but no doubt this is a very exaggerated statement. Having allowed the Kardar and his party a tolerably fair start, we mounted our horses, and quickly overtook the "slow coaches." The country travelled through, all this morning, was well cultivated, and some beautiful little spots continually greeted the eye. The numerous water-courses, and canals, impeded in a measure, our march; several of the smaller ones we leaped over, but it was ludicrous to observe some of the horsemen, endeavouring to lift their nags over a narrow little ditch, not a yard broad. But the most amusing incident of the day was, when a jackal broke cover. Of course the temptation to follow him could not be resisted; like magic the contagion spread, and away we scampered in hot pursuit. The chase was of short duration, for the animal became an easy prey. But, oh ye Gods and little fishes! did ye ever witness such a scene in the whole course of your existence. The ground was literally strewn with articles of apparel—puggries, kummerbunds, swords, spears, slippers, and even a few of the would be jockeys, were discovered scattered about in various directions. Two

or three Sowars, who ingeniously enough contrived to kiss their maternal earth, were now perceived wiping the dust from their vestments, and with anxious looks, examining their horses' knees, performing that operation with evident signs of fear. The Kardar and his wiser associates had quietly restrained the impetuosity of their steeds from the commencement of the chase, and remained passive spectators, consequently being in a safe position themselves, they vastly enjoyed the discomforture of their comrades. The fat Kardar laughed till the tears trickled down his cheeks, and upon regaining his usual composure, he assured me that he had never witnessed such an amusing "tomasha" before.

The cavalcade now proceeded sedately along the road. The above scene produced a lively conversation, relating entirely to sport.

Previous to entering the town of Ahmedpore, the soil partakes of a sandy nature, so that when in company with a party of cavalry, the annoyance one has to suffer is beyond description; the slightest puff of wind produces a cloud of sand that completely envelopes the whole party, who being mounted upon dancing quadrupeds, naturally enough increase the mischief. The Nawab was made acquainted with my intended visit, and had kindly given instructions for the preparation of one of his summer residences for my reception. The

garden selected was in admirable order, with neatly raised walks for pedestrian exercise; the rose beds were beautiful, and the fragrant odours emitted from the flowers formed a very grateful offering to one's senses after a dusty ride. On either side of the walks pomegranate trees afforded shelter from the rays of the morning or afternoon sun. These shrubs were the largest of their species I ever met with. The little summer-house corresponded in neatness with the adjacent grounds; nothing could have been more cheerful and picturesque. In the centre room, some luxurious individual had excavated a bath six feet square, in the middle of which played a small fountain. Large jars containing delicious rose-water were arranged round the apartment; fruits of various descriptions, together with sweetmeats, preserves and native dishes, were placed on marble platforms ready for use. There were no chairs or sofas, but in lieu of these European articles of furniture, a soft kind of carpet had been substituted, upon which, after completing my toilet, I reclined my weary limbs, well supported with cushions of such delicate texture, that one almost scrupled to repose against them. A well-flavoured hookah increased this sweet dream of real Oriental luxury, from which I was so shortly to be awakened, and to change for a soldier's life in camp.

It is not considered etiquette amongst Eastern noblemen to visit a superior or equal, immediately on arrival, so a messenger was despatched to the Nawab, requesting his highness to be gracious enough to appoint an hour the following day, when he might have leisure to afford me a reception. During the day fresh jars of rose-water, new dishes, and more fruit, kept continually pouring in, which considerably disturbed my repose. The servants kept bustling about with their prince's presents; official attendants every five minutes entered my apartment, apparently very anxious that I should lack nothing. In fact, I was not allowed even to dose for a few seconds owing to the noise around me, which about noon was such as to be past all conception. In the afternoon visitors of rank came and offered congratulations. War and Moolraj's affairs were freely discussed, and constituted the principal topic of conversation. All appeared confident of the ultimate success of the campaign, and expressed great satisfaction at Moolraj's late defeat by Major Edwardes.

These visits occupied so much time, that the sun had set before I was enabled to enjoy a moment to myself. Lighting a cheroot I proceeded to the garden, but even then undisturbed and retired cogitations were denied me. A European adventurer in the Nawab's service had raised and drilled a body of men after the English

fashion; these half-disciplined soldiers answered their prince's purpose to perfection, no doubt; but had Sir Charles Napier inspected the regiment, some difficulty might have arisen as to their passing muster. It was from this regiment that a guard were selected to attend upon the Sahib during his residence at Ahmedpore. Two of these orderlies constantly hovered about the premises, and watched every movement I made with childish curiosity. This style of invading one's privacy, so very repugnant to an Englishman's feelings, was very annoying, but finding that there was no alternative but pacifically to endure the perpetual presence of my orderlies, I endeavoured to extract some entertainment from the officious guards of honour. Their knowledge of military tactics only embraced part of the manual, and none of the platoon exercises; the former they performed with untiring energy some three dozen times, much to the approval of all parties concerned. After such an exciting day, need it be observed that during the night, visions of being drowned most pleasantly in rose-water, and afterwards buried in preserves and mango skins, floated perpetually before me.

CHAPTER VI.

The Nawab and his Palace—Presents—Departure from Ahmedpore—Accident on the Road—Arrival at Bhawulpoor—The Ferry—The Road—Arrival at Toojabad—Road to Camp—Jungle Scenes—Arrival in Camp.

On the following morning a vakeel from the palace brought information to the effect, that the Nawab would be visible at eleven o'clock, at which hour his highness's state carriage would be in readiness to convey me to court. This arrangement having been settled, relieved me from much anxiety, for it was desirable to reach Edwardes's camp as expeditiously as possible. Shortly before the appointed hour the state conveyance arrived at the door, surrounded by an immense concourse of people. To describe accurately this four-in-hand sort of vehicle would require the pen of a Dickens. As far as the horses were concerned, the most fastidious whip would have declared them unexceptionable; but the carriage was the queerest turn-out that could well be conceived. The frame-work was completely covered with

red cloth, inlaid with gold devices, representing battles, nautches, and sporting scenes; numerous small bells of various forms and colour were suspended all round, producing anything but ravishing martial strains. The animals wore similar decorations; a groom at each horse's head completed the tableau. The accommodation within would have been perfect, had the coach-builder considered it worth his while to give the carriage springs, though in all probability his mechanical skill was not capable of constructing them. The road to the palace was very rough and disgracefully out of repair, so the discomfort was indescribable. A guard of honor, and an immense assembly of spectators followed the cortège. The distance to the palace may have been three miles, and I was heartily rejoiced when the drive was completed. In the court-yard, another guard of honor was drawn up, and immediately the carriage of state made its appearance, matchlocks were discharged, and drums rolled forth their noisy welcome. A curious band likewise attended, and endeavoured to strike up God save the Queen: this last proceeding was too great a farce, and my risible faculties could no longer bear restraint, so concealing my face behind the lumbersome curtains I indulged my merriment. I endeavoured, however, to regain my composure, particularly as we had reached the palace gateway, and the

carriage had pulled up. On alighting, a vakeel received and conducted me to the Nawab's reception-room, and on entering this apartment the prince arose from a sofa and advanced half way to meet his guests. As he majestically crossed the room, an opportunity offered for scrutinizing the regal dignity. His dress was simple enough, and had it not been for one or two jewels of great value placed about his person, no one would have taken him for a king. Having met, he flung his arms round my shoulders, whilst I performed the same operation with his august body. We then continued ducking our heads over each other's shoulders for three times, when taking my hand he conducted me to a sofa, and we sat side by side; this was the most ludicrous scene of any. The Nawab was a fine tall good looking old fellow, with features that strongly expressed good humour, but he was cruelly corpulent, and must have weighed at the lowest computation nineteen stone. In fact, his body in diameter resembled that of an old oak tree, so that when we were embracing each other, my hands only reached to his hips. How the few spectators must have relished the scene, for I resembled a very small child struggling in the embraces of a huge bear; but no matter what the courtiers *thought*, none of them dared to express their opinions even by *look*; though the singular spectacle of two

human beings so vastly differing in bodily proportions, sedately, and without a smile, bobbing over each others' shoulders, would have formed sufficient excuse for even exciting the risible faculties of an overburdened camel.

Natives always commence their conversation by anxiously inquiring after your health, and until they have repeated the question some dozen times, not a word connected with business is uttered.

"Are you quite well?" commenced the Nawab.

"Thank you, Nawab Sahib, through the merciful kindness of Allah, and your extreme care, I'm in a state of salubrity; may I hope your highness enjoys good health?"

"Thank you, Sahib, I'm perfectly well, and your brother is the same I trust."

I replied in the affirmative, after which a pause ensued, and lemonade in English bottles was produced, but the usual accompaniment of a tumbler was not placed at my disposal; consequently, raising the bottle to my lips the beverage rapidly disappeared, the Nawab all the time enjoying the fun.

After this amusing performance had terminated to the satisfaction of actor and spectators, his highness again resumed the conversation. "But are you sure you are well—do inform me, are you indeed happy and enjoying good health." Many other common-place questions, including that one relating to the weather,

and so prevalent amongst the English, were repeatedly asked by the Nawab, until at last, considering this style of humbug had continued long enough, I touched upon the Mooltan affair.

"Sad business this Nawab Sahib; two British officers killed and the murderer up in arms." The prince as a matter of course, immediately put on a sorrowful countenance, and replied,—

"Sad news, indeed, very sad;" whereupon the courtiers taking the hint, as in duty bound, commenced a sort of low howl, until interrupted by the Nawab, who suddenly fiercely exclaimed, "But the Seikh infidels shall suffer for their treachery; an army already hems in Moolraj on every side, the guilty traitor will soon be captured." The courtiers imitated their prince, and not one out of that assembly but did not appear as fierce as a tigress robbed of her young. Whispering amongst themselves, though quite loud enough to reach the Nawab's ears; a short time was occupied by these worthies in administering the most nauseous dose of flattery imaginable, at least, so it sounded to English ears; but in the East it is merely considered etiquette to adore a man one moment, and to abuse him like a pickpocket when absent. To judge from the high encomiums lavished most profusely upon the Nawab, an uninitiated person might have quitted the august prince with the

firm conviction that his highness of Bhawulpore was, without exception, the most powerful and wisest monarch in the universe; his soldiers had merely to present their ranks before the enemy, and lo, the latter vanished from the field. His rule appeared to be most lenient, and his own private stock of morality, benevolence, and other good qualities, was not surpassed by any man living.

Such were the courtiers' opinions of their prince. However, though no doubt our friend had his faults, I believe, taking him all in all, he was a tolerably decent old fellow, and always remained faithful to the British; acting up to the old proverb, "when in Rome be a Roman." I deemed it advisable to offer some meed of praise, so commenced a short panegyric relating to the late successes gained over Moolraj. The Nawab returned my compliment, by politely stating that the late triumphant achievements were solely attributable to the able assistance of Lake and Edwardes' Sahib. Then, of course, his regal fancy was tickled at being informed, with all due submission to his superior wisdom, that the recent wonders could only have been achieved by the gallant Dardpoutrâ army. This latter compliment afforded infinite satisfaction to the Nawab; he smiled condescendingly, and at once resigning the stiff forms of a court, dismissed the attendants, and continued the conversation in a more familiar and hearty

style. Amongst other little curiosities of art, he displayed, with some pride, a gun that could, at any moment, be converted into a walking-stick. This ingenious weapon had been constructed by artizans residing in Ahmedpore. The gun was his constant companion, and how it was that no accident ever occurred, appears most wonderful; for not contented with loading it up to the muzzle, the Nawab called my attention to the fact that it was always on full cock ready for use. His sword was a magnificent blade of highly wrought steel, and beautifully watered; the value might have been 3000 rupees; however, the Nawab assured me that he purchased it at 10,000 rupees, a sum equivalent to about £1,000 in English money. A watch which he constantly kept referring to, was the next curiosity offered for inspection; but on investigating the works, and striving to ascertain the correct time, it appeared to stop occasionally altogether; in which lethargic state it would remain until violently shaken or knocked against the wall. However, not possessing sufficient mechanical skill to volunteer any repairs, I merely remarked that the workmanship displayed no ordinary talent in the individual who was its maker. We soon discovered that both were passionately fond of field sports, consequently a random conversation was commenced, entirely devoted to shooting

tigers, pigs, and deer. The Nawab, according to reports, was a great sportsman; and, like the Scinde Ameers, possessed several preserves, containing abundance of large game. He undertook these shooting excursions for only one month in the year, so he had never to complain of a paucity of animals. He invited me to accompany him after the termination of the war, adding that the heat at present was too oppressive for out-door amusements.

After a few remarks the old gentleman gave a hint that it was time to depart; he became fidgetty, twisting away at his beads at a furious rate; so guessing that he wished the interview at a close I withdrew, after performing another ludicrous embracing scene. The interview had been a fatiguing one, and rendered more troublesome, owing to my slight acquaintance with the Bhawulpore dialect; consequently it was a cause of some congratulation when the summer-house came in view. But disappointment again awaited me, and until near sunset a host, of no doubt well meaning visitors, constantly fluttered in and out of the apartment. The room was literally overwhelmed with presents, consisting of rose-water, fruits, and meats; the former and most acceptable gift being always retained for bathing purposes, whilst the greater portion of the eatables were distributed amongst the guard and other attendants,

who, in fact, regarded the fruits and meats as their own perquisites. I could not but regret the shameful waste displayed during my short stay, for I firmly believe that, during our sojourn at Ahmedpore, nearly 100 men might have been preserved from starvation for a fortnight, such was the quantity of provisions placed at my disposal. Next day arrangements were made for a farewell visit. The state coach again came into requisition, and on reaching the palace a scene, similar to that of yesterday's, was once more enacted; only with additional expressions of regret at our hasty separation. The conveyance, with its jingling bells, had proved so disagreeable that, mounting one of the horses belonging to an attendant sowar, the state carriage was left behind, and our steeds soon arrived at the garden. At about six o'clock the chief wuzeer made his salaam, bringing several presents with him, nearly all of which passed from my hands into those of the officious menials. The vakeel's son, who came with me from Sukkur, kept a very sharp look out for himself, and having taken possession of a quantity of silks, my friend walked off during the night. The Nawab's head wuzeer appeared a gentlemanly fellow, and though his conversation might have been very edifying, still his departure was hailed with some joy on my part. Previous to quitting, he informed me that preparations for

proceeding to Bhawulpore were already going on, and that I could start on the morrow. Early next day, the noisy guard and servants intimated that all was "tyar." But picture my astonishment and horror on perceiving that the same disagreeable conveyance, that had placed me in temporary purgatory a few hours before, was again destined to be employed, not for a short distance, but actually to convey the Nawab's wretched guest a march of twenty-five miles. If the road in the vicinity of the Nawab's palace was a rough one, what would that through the jungle be like? But unfortunately no other alternative presented itself, therefore I quietly submitted to my fate. The heat all day was fearful, and the horrid little bells drove me nearly to destraction. At five o'clock P.M. the thermometer rose to 89°, however we managed to jolt, roll, and tumble along, until, fairly wearied out with the day's exertion, the drowsy God displayed symptoms of coming to the rescue. His benevolent intentions were, however, frustrated, and a tremendous crash dismissed him instanter to other regions; the next moment my length was accurately measured in a ditch, whilst most intense darkness reigned all around. This accident was sufficiently annoying in itself, but to add to this disagreeable mishap, a tremendous dust storm burst suddenly overhead.

The reader may imagine that our vision, like Sam

Weller's, was rather limited; in fact, when after recovering from the first shock, I endeavoured to search for the carriage, all efforts proved futile, for even one's own hand was not visible at a foot's length. The howling of the wind rendered it impossible to make one's voice audible, even to a couple of yards distance. We were all accustomed to these dust hurricanes, and instead of vainly attempting to escape, we arrived at the conclusion that it would be advisable to remain quietly where we severally were, until the storm had somewhat abated. Nor were we detained long in suspense, for towards eleven o'clock the worst of the gale had passed over, and shortly the moon and stars re-appeared, looking prettier and brighter than ever; the latter twinkling away as if enjoying our upset and detention. A great blessing, however, attended this dust storm; for the air became cooler, and that, together with the delicious fragrance occasioned by a few drops of rain, amply compensated for our misfortunes. Having surveyed the smash and held a court of enquiry, it appeared that, notwithstanding our alarms, the damage was not so serious as expected. All the finery certainly had vanished, nor could a vestige of the gilt ornaments or bells be discovered. Far from bemoaning the loss of the latter, it was considered, at least by me, a cause of self-congratulation.

Raising the vehicle to its original position, the horses were again harnessed, and the whole party proceeded on the march. Several of the mounted escort, not relishing, it may be supposed, a trip through the enemy's country, had taken advantage of the temporary darkness to effect their escape. Luckily, we arrived at Bhawulpore before its inhabitants had risen, and thus avoided the pressure and gaze of a curious crowd, who would as usual have flocked round our caravan.

Immediate possession was taken of a dilapidated building that formerly had been inhabited by a European resident at the Nawab's court. The site selected for this house could not be considered a very desirable one, being erected in the vicinity of a bazaar, not particularly famous for the morality of its tenants, or cleanliness of its streets; but the heat was so oppressive, that any hovel, no matter how dilapidated, would have proved very acceptable, particularly when a glass of beer and a mild cheroot were close at hand. These little creature-comforts as well as a tolerable native dinner, made amends for the doorless and window fractured mansion. A few individuals had amused themselves with scratching their names in large characters over the dingy walls, and some natives, imitating the English visitors, had scrawled Hindu and Persian sentences, so as to utterly deface the interior. A day's residence, mostly

spent in doors, afforded little opportunity for visiting the town, so we contented ourselves by perambulating the large gardens adjacent to the quondam residency. No material difference appeared to exist as to their construction with those of Scinde; the date and pomgranate trees perhaps were in a more flourishing condition.

Wells, and small streams from a neighbouring canal irrigated the soil; but though bullocks and camels were slowly turning the Persian wheels that raised the water, neither gardeners nor drivers made themselves visible, so had we felt inclined to commit any depredations upon the fruit, the operation would have been an easy one. Towards dusk, the monotony of my situation was pleasantly relieved by the sudden arrival of a European, who was proceeding towards Ferozepore. Gladly did he accept half of my meal, for the cravings of hunger had been felt for nearly four-and-twenty hours. This traveller had passed direct through the town, and his opinion regarding Bhawulpore tallied precisely with my own. In style, filth, and with the level mud roofs of the houses, it bore a strong resemblance to a Scinde city. Early next morning arrangements were completed for crossing the river, so bidding adieu to my guest, I cantered down to the ferry. The boatmen anticipating a handsome remuneration were on the

alert, and with an alacrity charming to behold commenced unmooring the boat. Owing to the breadth of the river, and rapidity of the current, our passage occupied fully an hour and a half. Having reached the opposite bank, a most provoking circumstance occurred, entailing a detention of three good hours; during the whole of which time, all who had accompanied me in the ferry-boat, were obliged to remain exposed to the fierce rays of the sun. Nearly half of my escort had followed the example of their companions, who bolted during the sand storm. My experience was so limited, that the tricks practised upon me by these fellows were to me entirely unaccountable, nor could I understand the cause of their sudden retreat. After mustering the little band who had ventured across, a lamentable deficiency appeared evident. Out of nearly thirty sowers who quitted Ahmedpore with me, only thirteen or fourteen were now present. To testify any tokens of anger or disapprobation, would have been a superfluous waste of time. So what was to be done? Why go a-head, to be sure. The road was by no means a pleasant one, and as we dived into the jungles, our gallant cavaliers lighted their matchlocks in preparation for any sudden attack. Various were the anecdotes each individual related, and to judge from the description of their exploits, a listener might have arrived at the conclusion that few of

these gentlemen would stick at a trifle, when money or booty formed the object of their desire. The novelty of the expedition engaged in rendered the company of my associates far from being unpleasant. The fine blood horses of the Nawab had been exchanged for miserable bazaar ponies, whose pace scarcely exceeded that of an overloaded jackass. All efforts to induce my animal even to trot proved futile, and owing to our detention at the ferry, night overtook us ere we had journeyed ten miles. At last my pony quietly laid down, and obstinately refused to advance an inch. A large solitary tree appeared conveniently at hand, and beneath its ample shade we bivouacked for the night. Neither village nor hut was perceptible within approachable distance, so under these circumstances, the disagreeable necessity of continuing our fast was imposed upon us. With the exception of a hard boiled egg, a bad mango, and a cup of milk, not a particle of food had I tasted throughout the day; the intense heat had knocked me up, and altogether I was far from being in a state of salubrity. It was a source of vast consolation to observe that matters might have turned out more disadvantageously;—a heap of decayed sticks and leaves were soon converted into a blazing mass of fire, and the combined influence of cheroots and a fire dissipated all murmurings.

The ponies, not so fastidious in diet as their masters,

gathered ample provender from the tamarask jungle. Our saddles answered all the purposes of pillows, and after joking with the sowars, I gradually fell into a delicious slumber, which remained unbroken till near daylight, when a fierce grim-looking personage intimated that it was time to mount our nags; at the same time, with a grin, informed me that six other sowars had deserted from the camp. We were some time reaching Soojabad owing to the heat and bad road; but on my arrival a captain Howell, in the Nawab's service, kindly provided me with food and shelter for the night. The luxury of reposing oneself upon a comfortable couch after a weary journey is an indescribable boon.

Towards sunset we took equestrian exercise, and inspected the fortifications of the town, which were, however, very deficient both in material and plan of construction. The worthy host and commandant of Soojabad, mentioned that several cases of murder had lately occurred within a few miles of his garrison, but owing to the unsettled state of the country, the perpetrators had escaped detection. Captain Howell had been some years in the Nawab's service, but complained of the creatures hovering round Bhawul Khan's court. At present he was busily engaged in collecting supplies for the Dardpoutrâ army; but had the choice been offered, he

would have preferred the active life of a soldier in the field to that of a commissariat agent.

Soojabad is a large city surrounded by a high mud wall, and distant from Mooltan about twenty-two miles. On the arrival of the British forces under General Whish, it was converted into a temporary arsenal, and when the siege was raised, thousands of gabions and fascines were fabricated here by the sappers and miners. The most dangerous portion of the journey had yet to be accomplished, nor could I procure the loan of a good horse; the escort by this time had dwindled down to a couple of cut-throat looking personages, and Howell assured me that he could not spare a single individual from his already reduced and daily decreasing garrison. Under these inauspicious circumstances, with many misgivings, a start was made for Edwardes's camp.

Having cleared the suburbs and entered the jungle, it was time to scan the appearance of my guides, and determine upon some line of conduct to adopt in the event of treachery. We were all mounted on equally bad quadrupeds, but the sowars carried weapons of every description; both had shields of huge dimensions suspended across their shoulders, knives of various kinds ornamented their kummurbunds, and in addition to the above, swords, guns and pistols, completed their

armoury. My position was by no means an enviable one, the tacit guides pertinaciously refused replying to any of my questions, and for a long time maintained a sullen silence, not at all amusing to a juvenile traveller. To tell the real truth, when with frowning brows and angry gesticulations they whispered aside to each other, the idea presented itself that they were deliberately plotting against my life. Amongst the innumerable visions of bloodshed that flitted across my excited imagination, was the probability of being made a prisoner and conveyed to Moolraj—the deed was feasible enough—this fanciful idea caused some consideration. A brace of double barrelled pistols stuck in my waist belt, and a capital cavalry sword hanging by my side, were no contemptible weapons; so if I could only get first shot at one of them all would be well. Measuring them by my eye, I ascertained with no ordinary feelings of delight, that they were not higher in stature than myself, and as regarded muscular power, singly, the advantage was on my side. Therefore, once more looking cheerful, I muttered, confound the ruffians, who's afraid! However, to prevent any chance of treachery, the two worthy gentlemen were requested to keep well to the front. As we proceeded further on, our road laid through a tall jhow jungle, the branches of which overtopped our heads. On either side the ground was

uneven, affording a capital ambush for foot soldiers, who could slaughter cavalry passing along the road at pleasure; for the rough nature of the ground would not allow mounted soldiers to manœuvre over it.

On advancing nearer to camp we encountered several small parties of men, mostly all in search of forage for the cattle. The dust raised by this continued passing and repassing along a narrow road may easily be conceived, whilst the neighing of horses, creaking of bullock carts, and shouting of men, created a spirited scene of indescribable commotion. As we leisurely ambled along, occasionally the ghastly remains of a human skeleton appeared before us on the road-side; and once or twice the dead body of some murdered victim begrimed with mud, and entirely destitute of clothing, clearly demonstrated that the road was far from being a safe one. These hideous spectacles were of too common occurrence to create any sensation in the breasts of wayfarers, who carelessly passed by without, perhaps, any reflection as to the cause of the catastrophe. We met several desperate-looking characters, in whose lineaments might be traced vices and crimes of every description.

Shere Singh at this time was considered our ally, consequently his men were permitted to cut grass for their horses in rear of Edwardes's camp. Frequently

these long-bearded warriors scowled upon me as they went by, regarding me with such fierce and hang-dog expressions, that instinctively my hand would occasionally grasp the butt of a pistol. Doubtless, for two rupees, many of them would have shed blood to any amount, provided it could have been done with tolerable security to themselves.

A short halt was proposed on arriving half way, and for the first time one of the guides condescended to open his mouth. "Sahib," he said, "Do you see that place?" At the same time pointing to a village a quarter of a mile from the road; "nine or ten days ago Moolraj's sepoys attacked and looted the place, nearly destroying all the habitations."

"Indeed," I carelessly replied. The speaker seemed annoyed at my not having expressed more surprise, and sullenly busied himself with his saddle. Dismounting from the weary ponies to allow them some refreshment, the companionable cheroot soon wafted clouds of comfort; though all ending in smoke. The guides envied their master's temporary enjoyment, and regretted that they were unable to follow his example. Upon discovering that their hookah had unfortunately been left behind, much to their astonishment, I presented them with four or five rupees to purchase the much wished-for article. One immediately darted off into the jungle, and almost

instantaneously returned with a pipe. After receiving this paltry gift, their demeanour towards myself changed wonderfully for the better. Fresh milk and a few mangoes for my own private consumption were now placed before me, and we all came to a proper understanding with each other; and as we pursued our route the guides made ample amends for their previous taciturnity. The only obstacle that prevented me from fully comprehending their conversation was the rapidity with which they spoke, and their both talking at the same time. Though the high jungle tantalizingly enough obscured the view of the adjacent country, still, my two comrades whiled away the time in narrating innumerable little anecdotes, sprinkled, of course, with a few interesting deviations from the truth. False or otherwise, these stories assisted to mitigate the tedium of the road. On reaching a higher and more open ground, the camp of Rajah Shere Singh suddenly lay stretched before us. To a novice, such a scene was exciting in the extreme. Far and wide, divers coloured tents covered the ground, and we paused for a few moments to gaze upon the busy camp. Passing along through the tented field, the arrival of another Feringhee was was soon bruited abroad, and created no slight sensation. Our appearance, however, could not have been very prepossessing or formidable; and on

perceiving the Seikhs curvetting about upon showy animals, the riders dressed out as if proceeding to an evening party, I could not resist contrasting the difference between their stately air, and that of our miserable jaded dirty little party, evidently not prepared for a small one for tea. In fact, I must have resembled a "small puppy convicted of petty larceny." We hurriedly scrambled through the streets of tents, and were heartily rejoiced on once more regaining the wild jungle. Edwardes's camp was about four miles from that of the Seikh Rajah's; but owing to the knocked up ponies, we were some time reaching it. In about an hour and a half I was safe and sound in the gallant Edwardes's tent.

CHAPTER VII.

Edwardes and his party—Daily occupation—The Army prepares for the Field—Cortlandt's Regiments—Anecdote—Execution of Loonga Mull and Suchen Singh—An attempt to poison us.

THE sight of European faces was a delightful recompence for all the petty hardships lately passed through. Our party at dinner consisted of Majors Lake and Edwardes; Lieutenant Lumsden, Dr. Cole, General Cortlandt, and myself, forming an agreeable little coterie. Dinner was served up under a large awning, open on all sides to allow free ventilation, for the heat was almost insufferable;—Edwardes, on account of his severe wound, reclined on a couch. The insects annoyed us greatly, flocking round the candles in swarms, and having singed their wings, they sought immediate retreat in our plates; this however was a trifle. During the hot months our daily routine was unvarying. The breakfast hour was generally at about nine, after which we chatted about the war, or cracked a few harmless jokes, and then listened

to the Moonshee reading the native newspapers published in Lahore and Mooltan. This lasted for about a quarter of an hour, when Lake and Edwardes retired to their respective tents, to transact the official business of the day. Lumsden, the doctor, and myself, sent our beds into General Cortlandt's tent, as we quickly discovered that it was by far the coolest place during the day, the general being rather partial to comfortable quarters.

Cortlandt and Lumsden were frequently interrupted by official individuals applying for orders, or conveying some fresh intimation respecting the movements of the enemy. As for the doctor and myself, we either read, copied dispatches, or indulged in a quiet siesta, (*otium cum dignitate,*) without being disturbed; unless it was to accept a present of some fruit, or listen to any extraordinary item of intelligence. At about noon, one of the orderlies brought in an immense basket of mangoes. The doctor's bed was usually situated opposite one of the tatties, and this position became a source of no small annoyance to him; for immediately the golden fruit was announced, we one and all made a rush, and squatted ourselves nigger fashion upon the doctor's couch, and commenced a furious attack upon the contents of the basket. Now the process of devouring mangoes is far from being a cleanly one; hence arises the saying, that at a dinner

when ladies are present, mangoes should be admired but not eaten. The juice is sticky, and the stain unsightly; our worthy doctor had only just purchased a neat, delicate mat, for the adornment of the aforesaid bed; but in less than a week our united efforts painted it pretty considerably with mango fluid, and it was soon rendered unserviceable. Poor Cole did not much relish this cool mode of transacting business; however, being a very good tempered fellow, he could not hold out against our united supplications; and after a few days of remonstrance on his part, he became accustomed to the invasion, and we demolished mangoes on his bed for the future with impunity. A little before sunset our horses were brought to our tents, and attended by a strong escort we visited the outlying picquets and reconnoitered those of the enemy. Of course, occasionally we were favoured with an adventure or two during these pleasant evening rambles. The enemy having heard that nearly all the sahibs had visited a certain spot, and that, moreover, not only once, but frequently, resolved to capture the intruders. They appeared in our front, but always contrived by a very simple manœuvre to remain at a tolerable distance. No doubt their spies gave them the welcome intelligence that the Feringhees were accustomed to take daily exercise without sufficient protection. The chance of success,

and the gain likely to accrue from our capture, was a powerful temptation; and we frequently received reports that the foe on a certain night intended to lay in ambush, and so cut off our retreat. This stratagem, some declared, emanated from Moolraj himself; others said, that Moolraj's head man was the first to suggest the idea; be this as it may, no matter who concocted the plan, since it altogether failed. The most amusing evening recreation, to sharpen our appetites for dinner, consisted in firing a few rounds from a couple of nine-pounders, at the enemy's advanced picquets; or perhaps taking fowling pieces, we would indulge in the more innocent amusement of knocking over partridges, hares, and quail. The jungle round the vicinity of the camp, though not exactly a preserve, still afforded us a little sport. The natives were astonished at the expert manner in which the birds were tumbled over, and well they might be, for the general was a first rate shot, and frequently bagged his bird on horseback. On one occacasion, with ball alone, he managed to stop the progress of a Floricken. On one of our excursions we wandered so far that the shades of night surprised us ere we arrived near home, and on approaching the camp, the cavalcade were mistaken for a body of Moolraj's sowars. The large guns were immediately run out, and half the army mustered to arms, presenting us with a bullet or

two. This warm reception from one's own friends proved anything but agreeable, nor was it a mode of death we either calculated upon, or bargained for. To fall sword in hand, facing the foe, was natural enough; but to be shot down like dogs by your own soldiers, changes the affair vastly. One fellow took a deliberate aim at my head, and fired, but luckily the ball flew wide of its mark. Being satisfied that all the outposts were on the alert, and their front clear, we returned to dinner.

This was the most agreeable portion of the day; all assembled round one table, and the adventures recently encountered were told over again; occasionally our vocalists warbled a love ditty, or amused the audience with comic songs of every variety, from. "She's all my fancy painted her," to "The great Sea Snake,"—the latter being invariably called for. Then came Cortlandt's band, who sent forth martial strains of such an harmonious nature, that we were compelled to retire and repose in imagination upon their melodious notes. Sometimes, instead of taking equestrian exercise, we played quoits, or tried who could hurl an 18-pound shot the farthest. If not inclined for manual exertions, we quietly strolled through the camp, visiting the wounded; and were often amused for a quarter of an hour or so, by watching the soldiers cooking their evening

meal,—an operation, which, poor fellows, they performed with great gusto. As nearly all the men in camp prepared their own dinners, over a separate fire, the smoke from these little cookshops was an intolerable though unavoidable nuisance. When the cold weather set in, the offence increased, for during the entire night, large fires were perpetually spreading dense clouds of smoke over the camp, and no doubt this was the cause of several cases of opthalmia, which occurred subsequently. It was worth one's while to observe a group shivering with cold, although squatting almost upon the fire itself, the light of which, playing upon their dark swarthy faces, gave them the appearance of bandits.

On Sundays we all assembled in Edwardes's tent to hear him read prayers, nor can I remember that ever, during our camp life, we neglected the observance of the Sabbath day. The familiar services, under such circumstances, make a great impression on the mind; and our tent on these occasions would have formed an admirable picture.

Congregated in our native costume in one small place, we sought the aid of Him who hath promised that, when two or three are gathered together in His name, there will He be in the midst of them. And thus we passed our happy gipsy days, free from troubles, internal strifes, and the plottings of insincere friends. Thrice

fortunate is he whose lot allows him to enjoy the society and sincere friendship of such disinterested companions, as those I was associated with in Edwardes's camp. One of Moolraj's devices to encourage his soldiers, was to spread a report that he had determined to risk another encounter with his enemy. Sunday was the day generally recommended by his soothsayers, as being the most propitious for attacking our camp. These rumours were so frequent, that eventually but little attention was paid to them, though of course precautions were taken that, in the event of such an occurrence, our men should be prepared for the conflict. However, on one occasion, just after divine service had been performed, the enemy made such a formidable demonstration, that Edwardes deemed it advisable to turn out the force. As soon as it was decided to give battle, orders were issued accordingly, and the entire camp prepared for action. The turbulent scene baffles all description: tom toms were beating, bugles sounding the alarm, horses neighing, men shouting as they rushed through the mass of soldiers carrying orders, artillery dashing out of camp, and innumerable flags waving, many of them bearing the insignia of a bloody hand. Then came the cavalry raising a cloud of dust, the whole forming a tableau neither easily described nor imagined. On clearing the encampment the line moved

on, and having advanced almost within range of the fort guns, the order was given for a halt,—again we advanced, but the enemy retired, unwilling to try their strength.

The heat and dust combined were perfectly awful, and the water conveyed in glass bottles for quenching our thirst was so tepid, that none could imbibe it without vomiting afterwards. To give some idea of the temperature, it may be as well to mention the fact, that, four or five soldiers, inhabitants of the Punjab, quite overcame, fainted away, and one of the number fell down a corpse. It is almost needless to add, that after the fatigues of such a day, we all enjoyed our beer and cheroots. Amongst other allurements for the avaricious soldiery, Moolraj informed his followers that he purposed in the next battle to fire gold round shot from his guns. However, like all the other enticements, this golden one also proved a signal failure, but to do justice to our enemy, I must allow that they were no cowards, and fought like brave men. Our force, though mostly composed of men professing the Mussulman faith, still contained several Hindoos and Seikhs. They were principally inhabitants of the Punjab or neighbouring hills.

The Nawab of Bhawulpore dispatched about 10,000 Dardpoutras to Edwardes's assistance; some 4,000

Patans lent their services; Belooches and other tribes also visited the camp for employment; so that with General Cortlandt's three regular regiments, we could at one time during the campaign, produce in the field nearly 18,000 fighting men. The regular troops deserve some mention. Their accoutrements and drill were precisely similar to that of the company's army. All words of command were issued in the English language, but in addition to the musket and bayonet each soldier was provided with a tulwar or sword. In fact, on closing with the enemy, they preferred the latter weapon, using it with the right hand, and they contrived to inflict no small damage amongst the ranks of their antagonists; in the interim the fixed bayonet, supported by the left hand, did not remain idle; for, occasionally, when a favorable opening occurred, the wretched foe received a cut over his head and enjoyed a prog in the stomach at the same moment. I rather approve of this style amongst natives, as being an admirable and novel mode of eastern warfare. The bayonet is a clumsy weapon in the hands of many sepoys, and were the choice allowed them, they would vastly prefer the sword.

Cortlandt's three regular regiments were respectively designated as the "Soobhan Khan ke pulton," so christened after the colonel, who raised and commanded the corps. Then came the "Kutar" or dagger

regiment. Each private in this corps wore a small brass ornament in the shape of a dagger upon his breast-plate. The third, and my favourite one, claimed the splendid appellation of "Soorujmookee," or regiment of the Sun. General Cortlandt was excessively particular in the selection of recruits; those who presented themselves for enlistment had to undergo a rigid examination as to character, health, &c. Owing to these precautions, Cortlandt's regiments were composed of as fine a body of soldiers as could well be enlisted, possessing the courage of European troops. We all placed implicit confidence in them; in fact, their fidelity to our cause, equalled our own, nor do I hesitate in asserting that the soldiers in the Soobhan Khan and Soorujmookee regiments could be implicitly relied on, and would follow wherever their commanders led them.

I can say little of the Kutar regiment, not having mixed so much with the men. With their green jackets they made a fine appearance on parade. Attached to this brigade, were three troops of artillery; like the other branch, they wore European uniform, though perhaps more ornamental and showily got up.

The gunners were mostly Seikhs or Punjabees, and a right noble set of fellows they were. During the campaign, frequent opportunities occurred for displaying their contempt of danger. Once, when nearly sur-

rounded by an overwhelming portion of the enemy, and all expected to be instantly cut up, the brave men, perceiving that their guns could no longer be employed advantageously against the foe, calmly drew their sabres, and with folded arms and clenched teeth waited for the charge, nobly resolving to stand by their guns to the last. Imagination could not picture a more splendid sight, than the stern determination expressed on the countenances of these hardy warriors. Luckily, Edwardes perceived our critical position, and sent immediate reinforcements to our assistance, when the fortune of war again smiled upon us; for the enemy, after a short though severe hand-to-hand fight, were driven back to their entrenchments. A band followed the regular regiments, and the musicians occasionally favoured us during dinner with one or two popular airs, such as "God save the Queen," and a few French melodies, but the British Grenadiers appeared to be the favourite piece.

The Patans and Rohillas were the first levies raised by Edwardes, and though not particularly addicted to cleanly habits, were a powerful and brave race of men, with constitutions well adapted for the fatigues of war; so after all, though not very lavish in the expenditure of soap, they answered our purpose well enough, and were far preferable to having a parcel of drawing-room beaus in our camp.

The army dispatched by his highness the Nawab of Bhawulpore, consisted of some 10,000 men, generally termed Dardpoutras. The onerous task of managing these wild soldiers devolved upon Lake, nor could an abler or more intelligent officer have been selected for this arduous duty. His kind and courteous manner won the hearts of Europeans and natives, and the men he commanded admired and esteemed their young leader.

A Dardpoutras' pay was three rupees per mensem, rather a small sum certainly, but one with which they appeared contented, though perfectly aware that the other portion of the force received double the amount. Lumsden and his guide corps composed of about 150 men, cavalry and infantry, deserve to be noticed here. The excellent and gallant services performed by this brave little band were truly admirable, and highly redounded to their youthful commandant's credit. The chief native officer possessed the courage of a lion, with the impetuosity of youth, and the sagacity of an aged warrior blended together. The foot soldiers attached to the guide corps were all furnished with English rifles, and splendid marksmen they were too, on one or two occasions greatly aiding their mounted comrades.

When the variety of tribes, castes, and religions, residing in our camp, are taken into consideration, it

appears astonishing how well our dusky heroes conducted themselves. Their praiseworthy conduct deserves thus to be brought before the public, for be it remembered, that with the exception of Cortlandt's regiments, none of our men had been previously subjected to military discipline; but had been accustomed to act as they pleased, and were constantly engaged in some marauding expedition. Seldom was it that their quarrels terminated fatally, at least not to our knowledge, but their private misunderstandings were rarely brought to Edwardes's notice. One day, however, a very tragical affair took place, unfortunately terminating unpleasantly for both parties, as the belligerents died from their severe wounds.

Perhaps the reader's curiosity may be awakened, so I'll disclose at once the secret. Of course a woman is in the case. Young ladies in those fighting days seldom honored us with their presence in camp; consequently, when one of these beautiful houris chanced to visit our neighbourhood, knights were always forthcoming to wield a sword in favour of the fair one. A good looking damsel, seeking her fortune, attracted the attention of two gallants, and as both could not marry her, a recourse to arms was the result. Retiring to the jungle, a convenient spot was soon selected, whereon to fight for their lady love. This little incident would

have formed a capital story for the novelist; both fought fiercely, neither being willing either to receive or offer quarter, until both fell down through exhaustion, occasioned by loss of blood. One died the same evening, and the other did not long survive his antagonist. The heartless young lady, instead of retiring to some sequestered valley, became the wife of a gay young suitor a day or two after the above tragedy was perpetrated.

We only inflicted capital punishment twice during the time our force lay encamped before Mooltan, and on both occasions the harshest measures were obliged to be adopted. No one fully acquainted with the circumstances can say aught against the fairness of the sentences awarded to the culprits. Loonga Mull, a Kardar of some village in the vicinity of Mooltan, was the first who suffered the ignominious death of hanging. When the rebel, Dewan Moolraj, first contemplated his insurrection, this Karda, Loonga Mull, was among the first to tender his services and to commence raising levies for the Dewan; for these performances the latter held him in high repute, and the Kardar was covered with honors. Though Loonga Mull had been cautioned as to his reconnoitring our camp, all advice fell to the ground; he had been discovered tampering with the soldiers, offering them most exorbitant pay if they would desert our cause; he gained a few recruits; how-

ever, such a state of affairs could not be permitted to continue.

The second time he was discovered and forgiven, but with the understanding that should he again be detected committing a similar offence, instantaneous capital punishment would be the consequence of his temerity. Whether it was that the infatuated man imagined that he would yet another time receive the same indulgence as heretofore, or whether he relied upon his own skill in remaining incognito, could never be ascertained. However, one dark night our friend was captured and brought before Major Edwardes. The latter was naturally incensed; but not wishing to punish the offender without having the opinion of the other officers, he immediately convened an assembly, late though it was, to determine upon the fate of Loonga Mull. After ample deliberation the treacherous spy was condemned to death. Not only were our own troops deserting, but those in the camp of our ally Shere Singh were daily going over to the enemy; in fact, for the last fortnight, large bodies of men had quitted both our forces, with the view of endeavouring to better their fortunes by turning their arms against us. Now that one of the principal offenders had been seized in the very act of inciting our men to desertion, it was considered advisable for the welfare and future success of

our expedition, to inflict some severe punishment without delay, as an example to all spies and evil disposed people. Death was accordingly decreed. The gallows, though primitive, was the only one procurable on the instant. Three solitary date trees just in front of our camp were chosen for the site. The centre tree having been cut down, was bound in a longitudinal direction from one tree to another. A temporary platform, consisting of a couple of sticks completed the arrangements.

Early in the morning, General Cortlandt's regular regiments formed three sides of a square opposite the gallows. The irregular soldiers and camp followers remained outside, apparently as anxious and bloodthirsty as any London mob gathered to witness a Newgate execution. The wretched man seemed wholly unmoved by what was going forward, and when all was in readiness marched steadily up to the fatal trees, with his arms securely pinioned behind his back.

On arriving at the foot of the ladder he turned round with an appealing look, and requested to be allowed to fasten the rope round his neck with his own hands; and so be spared the degradation of being defiled by the touch of the hangman, who was a sweeper, and, of course, a low caste individual. His request was not granted. An example was required, and in this man's

case no mercy was shown; being a Hindoo, it was derogatory to his caste to have a low menial to act as his executioner; consequently, his punishment was doubly severe.

Loonga Mull's death proved very beneficial to our cause, and as expected, our desertions decreased most rapidly from the day on which the Kardar was condemned to death. I ought to mention that orders had been received from Lahore for the execution of this man when caught. Moolraj hearing of his friend's untimely end, flew into an ungovernable fit of rage. At first, from all accounts his anger exceeded all bounds, and he resolved to avenge his trusty follower's death without loss of time, exclaiming aloud in his durbar, "Ah, this is the first amongst us to suffer death, and I shall be the last."

On the spur of the moment he resolved to march against our camp, and spies afterwards informed us, that he had actually mustered his troops and drawn them up in battle array; however, it appears that on second considerations, he wisely refrained from risking another engagement with troops who had beaten him before, and who, of course, were elated with success.

A short period only elapsed after the above-mentioned execution took place, when another serious case presented itself; but as the crime was perpetrated in Shere

Singh's army, it was decided that the sentence should be carried out within the precincts of the Rajah's camp. Suchan Singh was the name of the hoary Seikh, who attempted to poison his master, Shere Singh. The old man when called upon for his defence appeared to be cool and collected, vehemently denying the accusation preferred against him. Well do I remember seeing the poor fellow proceeding for trial, his long white beard flowing down to his waist, his firm step and mild demeanour; apparently the very picture of innocence. After a most patient hearing he was considered guilty, and condemned to death.

As previously remarked, Edwardes, for various reasons, determined to have Suchan Singh executed in the Seikh Rajah's own camp. In the first place, by making it appear that Shere Singh not only sanctioned but carried out the sentence of death imposed upon his fellow Seikh, Edwardes wisely calculated that he should be attaching an extra weight upon his fickle ally's shoulders; for the Seikhs would naturally look upon their Rajah with distrust, not knowing whose turn it might next be. On the other hand, the enemy would be cautious how they received any of the Rajah's protestations of friendship, if the latter ever should be induced to proffer any. For a season these prognostications were verified, and the Seikh prince became an

object of suspicion with all around him. Previous to the performance of the mournful ceremony, Shere Singh, who never relished the task imposed upon him, strove his utmost to persuade Edwardes to hold the execution in his own camp. He dreaded the odium that he felt convinced would be attached to his name, were he to blow away a Seikh from one of his guns. Vainly did he remonstrate upon the subject—Edwardes was resolved, and ultimately our ally was forced to agree, and a few days after the trial the prisoner suffered the extreme penalty of the law. The brave old Kalsa veteran met his death like a soldier, and as he advanced towards the cannon which was to blow him to pieces, merely requested as a favour, to be allowed to face the instrument of destruction, instead of having his back turned to it.

After these two examples, affairs wore a more favourable appearance, desertions were less frequent, and all petty murmurings gradually subsided. Previous to General Whish's arrival, an incident occurred in our camp, which nearly exterminated the whole batch of our small European party. Had the scoundrels succeeded in their cowardly attempt to poison us, no doubt nearly all our men would have taken service with Moolraj, or at least, the greater portion of them. At the time the unpleasant feelings we experienced were

not such as to conduce to merriment, but we often had a good laugh after it was all over. We had just finished dinner, and Edwardes had adjourned to his tent, or rather I should have said, was proceeding to his tent, when he was seized with violent pains in his stomach, and commenced vomiting furiously. He despatched a messenger for the doctor, who on reaching Edwardes, imitated the example of his patient in such a praiseworthy manner, that he could render him neither professional aid nor comfort. We all suffered more or less that night, but poor L——, of the guide corps, was a sad sufferer. Raising himself on the couch he grasped firmly the tent-pole, whilst I and an old servant of his, by name Moolah, twisted a sheet round his body, and pulled him against the pole with all the force we could muster; we certainly must have squeezed from him whatever poison he had swallowed.

Having recovered somewhat from the effects of the poison, all retired to Edwardes's tent; but on arriving there we encountered an immense crowd, who evidently from the roars of laughter, were witnessing some amusing scene. It appeared that the culprits had been detected, and were now seated on the ground tied back to back. The doctor had given them a strong emetic, and with a view of facilitating its operation, two or

three stout fellows were flogging the rascals most unmercifully.

Such a moonlight scene may be imagined, but my descriptive powers are not equal even to give a faint idea of this ludicrous exhibition. From this date, no one ever again hazarded an attempt to poison us.

General Whish arrived shortly after the above occurrence, somewhere towards the end of August, and accompanied by a numerous staff, visited our camp.

CHAPTER VIII.

First Siege—The Allies fall back—Battle of Soorujkoond—Horse Races—Price of Goods—Bombay Troops arrive—Christmas—Second Siege commences—M'Mahon, the gallant Volunteer—City is taken by Storm.

THE besieging force now consisted of three distinct armies, Shere Singh being in the centre; however, other arrangements were soon made, for it was considered safer and more advantageous that Edwardes should change positions with Shere Singh, thus enabling us to keep open the communication with the British General's camp, and at the same time permitting us to retain the road to Bhawulpore in our own hands. Both armies, in changing ground came into collision at a narrow bridge, and had we not been on the spot directing the movements of the troops, it is impossible to say what disturbances might have taken place. Luckily our regular regiments were in front, so Cortlandt pushing them forward, succeeded in reaching the bridge first, and a short time after all were safely encamped upon our new ground.

We were relieved from much anxiety when these manœuvres were completed; for the Seikhs inherit such a treacherous disposition, that scarcely any reliance could be depended upon the fidelity of Shere Singh, or his followers. Our camp was now situated about four miles from General Whishe's, and nearly the same distance from that of the Seikh Rajah; the British being on our right. Tranquillity was not suffered to continue for any length of time; it so happening that on the 1st of September, 1848, we all broke ground, and immediately the struggle commenced. The very first day of our advance witnessed some severe fighting; the enemy certainly holding the most advantageous positions, as they occupied all the high hillocks, besides being well screened in the adjacent gardens; all of which were surrounded by strongly built walls. On our extreme left some sharp hand-to-hand fighting was kept up through the day, nor did we succeed in carrying the enemy's position, until several casualties had occurred. Towards the evening, the fire on both sides slackened, and we retired to our tents, not however to repose, for our new camp, by some mistake had been erected just within range of the fort guns, and for a period of no less than fourteen days were our men and cattle exposed to an annoying fire from the enemy. One Sunday, we were attending divine service as usual, when our devotions were sud-

denly interrupted by the round shot and shells whizzing over our heads, or ploughing up the ground around us. Many of these missiles passed actually underneath the very tent ropes, and a servant seated close outside the doorway had his leg broken. Moolraj's artillery by some means or other had discovered the range and whereabouts of the tents inhabited by the European Officers; and the fire maintained for an hour or two proved anything but agreeable, in fact great confusion prevailed in camp as long as the firing continued. As we advanced our entrenchments, the camp itself was not annoyed so much; but from the 1st to the 14th of September we were constantly engaged with Moolraj's troops; in fact, to use a vulgar expression, it was a regular case of hammer and tongs, day and night. During this busy fortnight, General Whish made us a present of a couple of dozen rockets. Though not very destructive in our inexperienced hands, still they afforded much amusement, with no slight astonishment amongst our wild soldiers. The enemy suffered little or no damage, owing in a great measure to the bad composition. The first one lighted, rushed backwards into our own camp with most malignant fury; the next burst on the spot, whilst the third and last bolted sideways, consequently the rocket practice was discontinued from that day. A facetious sable wag of our party

strongly recommended that the remainder of the rockets should be placed within Moolraj's reach, "for," said he, "if Moolraj attempts using them, he'll be sure to destroy himself."

It was about this time that poor Lieutenant Christopher, of the Indian navy, received his death wound. He was a noble and upright man, well informed, and considered a very intelligent officer. He had only returned a few weeks previously from an exploring expedition up the Indus, and those who had the pleasure of his acquaintance sincerely regretted his loss. The doctor with his usual assiduity did his utmost to restore his patient, but all professional skill failed; and the wounded sufferer after a long, though I am happy to say not painful illness, was taken from this world.

On the evening of the 14th September the aspect of affairs suddenly shifted, and the rebellion of the Mooltan governor was converted into a war with the Seikh nation. That evening my duty took me to the advanced trenches, when orders arrived to the effect, that all the guns and soldiers were to evacuate their present position, and fall back upon the first parallel. Throughout the course of the day large bodies of the enemy's infantry were observed to be taking up positions on the rising ground in our front and extreme left; but no attack was made until towards sunset, when an irregular

fire came dropping amongst us. However, our troops fell back in admirable order, and occupied for the remainder of the night, the first parallel. As I had been on duty for thirty-six hours at a stretch, Edwardes despatched an orderly to me, telling me to come to dinner. On reaching the open zemeanee or awning, wherein the eatables were spread out, I was much surprised at beholding a number of armed men, cavalry and infantry, drawn up in front, and on a nearer inspection, discovered the visitors to be Seikhs, in Rajah Shere Singh's service; and that worthy individual himself, I ascertained, had paid Edwardes a visit.

General Cortlandt, with his usual discretion, had from the commencement issued orders to the regular regiments to be prepared for active service at a moment's notice. Shortly after, Shere Singh and his party took their leave, apparently, in the most friendly manner, though the rascals had already premeditated mischief. The next news we received connected with our trusty ally, was, that he and nearly all his followers had gone over to Moolraj, with colours flying, drums beating, and altogether, considering the whole affair a splendid "tomasha," alias "lark." As might have been expected, when Shere Singh's treachery became known, the greatest excitement for a short time prevailed in both our camps; however, it gradually subsided,

and then we congratulated ourselves, that Shere Singh had withdrawn his troops at a not very critical moment.

Not to weary the reader with superfluous matter, it may be as well to state, that after mature consideration, it was finally resolved to suspend further operations, and the siege of Mooltan was raised, to the disgust of all. The allies took up their former position, and General Whish encamped in the vicinity of the ground lately vacated by the rebel Seikh Rajah.

Moolraj, ever ready to seize upon any opportunity whereby the spirits of his men might be encouraged, no sooner heard that his foes had fallen back, than with the usual bragadocia of a native, he ordered a salute to be fired, in honor of his glorious achievements over the British. During the first siege several casualties occurred in both camps. The heat was now very oppressive, and together with the listlessness that overpowered us, rendered our camp life intolerable. Things, however, were not long permitted to remain in such repose, for the enemy, no doubt encouraged by our quiet behaviour, resolved to annoy us as much as lay in their power; consequently, on the 1st November, Moolraj brought out six guns and commenced throwing up entrenchments. For a time, not aware of his intentions, he was permitted to excavate a long line of works without any interference on our part; however, towards

night he let drive at our camp right and left, until we began to feel rather tired of such an amusement. So accurately had Moolraj's artillery men obtained the range of our camp, that it became dangerous for anybody to march through the tented field. The round shot and shell committed some mischief amongst our men and the poor unsuspecting cattle. The batteries and outer works were less dangerous, at all hours, than remaining in our tents; for the shot kept incessantly bounding like cricket balls through the canvas abodes, frequently passing under the tent ropes, and even through the tents themselves.

A little boy ten years of age had his leg carried off by a nine-pound shot, which he foolishly endeavoured to stop in its progress. I believe the poor child survived the amputation of his limb, and now enjoys a pension. Several men and boys were always on the alert to pick up cannon balls, and we always paid them for their trouble. Our men wondered at the enemy's temerity in attacking our force; signs of discontent were daily making their appearance, and it became evident that, unless the enemy met with a decisive check, the worst consequences would ensue. To add to the dilemma, on the night of the 6th it was rumoured that the Kutar regiment had deserted to Moolraj in a body. At first no one gave credit to the report, but alas, orderly after

orderly arrived and corroborated the sad news. It had been decided to attack the enemy on the following morning (7th November), and the night previous I was sleeping in our advanced battery, when, about midnight, a heavy cannonade was going on in the direction of Pollock's battery, and soon after, a few shot paid us a visit. Lieutenant Pollock was a fine gallant young officer, and had lately joined our force, in the capacity of a political.

On the night in question he had been despatched with some 2,000 men to occupy a strong position on the left, a couple of guns from the British camp being with him. The firing was maintained till about one o'clock, when all again became quiet, not a gun or musket disturbing the tranquillity of the night, which, by the bye, was bitterly cold. However, though apparently a general lull reigned all around, the demon of war kept hovering o'er us, and at about half-past five A.M., the enemy, fully 7,000 strong, charged down upon our position, and for a few moments I thought all was lost. Luckily, the guns were tolerably well protected by a low mud wall four feet high, but even then, most of the gallant defenders bit the dust, and in less than five minutes, the battery was surrounded by an overpowering force: the infantry on my right were driven back with great slaughter, and the enemy pressed sore upon

us poor victims guarding the guns. At this critical moment Edwardes perceived the dangerous position we were placed in, and immediately ordered reinforcements to our assistance; this timely aid saved us from utter destruction; a few minutes further delay and the whole of us must have been put to the sword. Reinforcements now kept pouring to the scene of action from both armies, and a fierce fight ensued.

The Seikhs fought well, but were obliged to give way to the impetuosity of our men, who would have followed the enemy up had it not been previously decided that our men were, on no account, to be permitted to cross the canal, for fear of being mistaken, by the British, for Moolraj's soldiers. The enemy was thus enabled to accomplish a safe retreat to their entrenchments. They were not allowed much time for resting after their late defeat, for the British brigade, under that very energetic officer Colonel Markham, now attacked the enemy in flank, and a total rout was the result.

Our irregular troops admired the discipline and bravery of the British soldiers, and after the Seikhs had fled, they mingled amongst the white faces, shaking hands, laughing and performing a variety of antics, most ludicrous to a looker on. Colonel Wheeler's irregular horse were engaged in this action, and made

themselves conspicuous, by gallantly charging up the banks of a canal, in the face of a heavy fire. The brave commandant had his horse shot under him.

Six guns were taken from the Seikhs, and one or two men of note were amongst the prisoners. Thus, with a very trivial loss, was concluded a brilliant little affair, which tended greatly to restore the confidence of our soldiers, and convinced Moolraj as well as his followers, how futile it was to struggle against the superior skill and strength of the English. Many of the soldiers who deserted us the night before, were killed during this engagement, which, by the bye, was designated the "action of Soorujkoond," after a village of that name, situate in the centre of our camp. Never did rebels meet with such speedy punishment for their treachery. We recognised them by their green jackets, that being their regimental colour.

The men, however, were not all equally culpable, for after a minute investigation of all the circumstances connected with this desertion, it appeared that not more than 200 men went over for good to the enemy. The ringleaders adopted a clever stratagem in order to compel the remainder of their comrades to follow their example. On the evening they quitted Pollock's battery, the principal rebels pretended to be very valiant, and anxious to charge down upon the foe; they loudly

demanded permission to attack the Seikh works, but this was wisely refused. Nevertheless, though repeatedly admonished against committing such an imprudent act, the chief mutineers, in defiance of all orders, drew their tulwars, and with loud vociferations, commenced to all appearance a terrific onslaught. The rest of the Kutar Mookee sepoys, not aware of the ruse practised upon them, readily snapped at the bait; animated at perceiving their comrades rushing madly on, or feeling ashamed at their own inactivity, a certain *esprit de corps* spread through the confused ranks, and all to a man charged likewise; when, alas! they were speedily convinced of the trap they had fallen into. They wisely consented for a consideration to serve in Moolraj's army, each soldier receiving a handsome present either in rupees, or perhaps gold ornaments and valuable necklaces.

Short was their sojourn in the Seikh ranks, for, with the exception of the ringleaders, nearly all returned to our camp before the morning, laughing heartily at having turned the tables against Moolraj. The presents and money they were allowed to retain, so on the whole they rather gained by the treachery of their comrades. But the splendid action of Soorujkoond, on the 7th of November, 1848, clearly demonstrated that the course they had adopted was the wisest and most profitable

one. From this date to the termination of the war, not a single case of desertion came before our notice, although Moolraj offered most exorbitant remuneration to our people should they be disposed to enter his service. Twenty rupees a month he agreed to pay foot soldiers, and double that sum for a sowar; however, though tempting, the love of life predominated over all pecuniary speculations, and his recruiting efforts failed. In fact, his own soldiers now wavered in their allegiance, and were daily hurrying away from the Fort to join Chutta Singh's party. Shere Singh, be it remembered, had long ago left Mooltan; still the Dewan would not consent to an unconditional surrender.

Mr. Quin, Edwardes's writer, was knocked off his horse by a spent round shot, but thanks to his strong ribs, the gallant fellow jumped on his steed again, and saw the finish of the fight at Soorujkoond. The cold weather gradually made its appearance, and Moolraj not evincing any disposition to attack us again, the sportsmen of the camp endeavoured to shake off the feeling of *ennui* that now predominated over both camps. Racing and other manly amusements were proposed, everybody, from the General to the smooth-faced ensign, warmly seconding the motion.

Englishmen are really strange beings; no matter what clime they may be stationed in, provided a few four-

legged animals can be procured, there and then the national sport is sure to be met with. Subscriptions were quickly raised, and a tolerable race-course was formed. All preliminaries with the stakes having been settled, one fine afternoon the occupants of both camps flocked to the ground selected for the sports. The scene was a very lively one, all the spectators appeared happy and in high spirits. It was strange to observe the short-cropped European soldier mingling with our wild-looking warriors; the latter firmly convinced that the British had taken leave of their senses. The meaning of such a tomasha they could not comprehend. Time has effaced from my memory the names of the successful riders, but our doctor, I believe, was the most fortunate jockey.

The races afforded vast amusement to the spectators, but one in particular, styled the "Political Handicap" may be mentioned. The following gentlemen entered their horses; Majors E—— and L——, Lieutenants L—— and P——, the Doctor, and General C——, all being officers attached to the Allied Irregular army. Doctor C—— won the race easily, for his competitors bolted off the course into the jungle; when the starting bell tingled, L——'s mare became so terrified at the Irish yells and Dardpoutra howls, that she

remained as firm as a rock, and finally ran backwards, not the usual mode certainly of running for a race.

The most laughable scene of all was a sweepstakes, raised for the express benefit of Edwardes's sowars. Loud were the peals of laughter that greeted the swarthy jockeys. No one could command his risible faculties when these fellows passed, so ludicrous was the appearance of the miserable-looking bits of horse flesh, and the riders' legs moving like so much clock-work.

The officers now contrived to amuse themselves tolerably well; as for ourselves, we always had plenty of occupation. Our visitors were numerous, and we in our turn were frequently spending the day with our allies. The reader, perhaps, may be curious to ascertain the price we paid for articles of consumption during the siege. Fortunately I am enabled to satisfy his curiosity, by merely referring to some old bills and accounts that have escaped destruction.

Beer is a favourite beverage at all times in India, but particularly during a campaign, when it is in great request, and consequently, is much dearer at that time than any other. A dozen quarts of beer fetched eighteen, twenty, and even twenty-five rupees. Hams were considered luxuries not to be enjoyed by subalterns; in fact, such expensive commodities were only pur-

chased by colonels, field officers, and those happy individuals who had thirty rupees to throw away. Those subject to prickly heat and requiring flannel, had to pay for the same at the rate of seven or eight rupees a yard. One pound of good English gunpowder would find a willing purchaser at six rupees. Pistols complete always amply remunerated the dealer; 300 rupees were frequently offered and refused for these useful fire-arms. Cheese sold for three rupees a pound; and a box containing 1,000 cheroots would stand the smoker upwards of 130 rupees, being just 100 rupees higher than the usual demand. All wines were dear. A rupee is about equal to a couple of shillings English money; therefore, the enormous profit derived from the sale of the above-mentioned articles can easily be realized by the reader. True, the merchant had to undergo considerable risk, and once or twice merchandise coming down the river Ravee, was intercepted by the enemy; the merchant in such cases suffering a dead loss. Again, carriage for their goods was very expensive and not always procurable, the goods being in any case liable to some damage in their transit. In order to meet these contingencies, the merchants were obliged to raise the prices of their wares; but the native vendors, no doubt, took advantage of the state of affairs, to reap a most exorbitant profit.

The Parsees who are allowed to be by far the most enterprising native merchants in India, possessed during the Punjab campaign, very superior advantages over their Bengal competitors. The river Indus flowing within four miles of camp, enabled the Bombay speculators to land their goods at a ghat in the vicinity of the British army. The carriage for this short distance was moderate; in many cases the Parsees obtained the loan of carts and bullocks, without having to pay any remuneration for the same. Fortunately for them, scarcely any risk of capture was incurred, for the ghat was rather to the rear of both camps, and our patrol parties were constantly going their rounds in the direction of the ghat. Vastly different was it in the case of Lahore merchants, who had to run a perfect gauntlet in coming down the Ravee, and even the Sutledge route was by no means safe. Shere Singh captured 2,000 rupees worth of goods on their way to our camp. I fancy I see the rebel Rajah tasting alternately jam, sardines, blacking, and castor oil.

About the middle of November, we obtained the services of a gallant volunteer, by name M'Mahon, a regular Irishman, not only by name, but by nature; he possessed most indomitable courage, and was considered rather a sharp youngster. He is now an Assistant Commissioner in the Punjab, and richly merits all the

honors received from Government; hereafter a few of his gallant exploits will be recited, but they must appear in their proper place.

A day or so before Christmas, the Bombay column arrived, looking as fresh and cheerful as if proceeding to a wedding, and on the 25th of December, General Whish again broke ground; and once more with renewed vigour and superior means, he prepared to punish the vile murderer, whose fate was now so soon to be decided. Captain Powell, and some midshipmen of the Indian navy had just arrived in command of about forty European seamen, who were to lend their assistance in working the guns. These hardy sons of Neptune afforded much amusement to those who paid a visit to what was denominated the "sailors' battery." Their naval dress and quaint expressions, forming a remarkable contrast to their artillery comrades. The officers were invited to partake of our Christmas dinner, and we likewise had the pleasure of the company of one or two other guests, including my brother, who had lately arrived with the Bombay column; so we constituted a famous party, nearly thirty being present at the convivial board. This appeared an awful crowd to us, who for the last four or five months had been accustomed to dine entirely by ourselves. The merry party had all assembled, and the knives and forks were busy at work,

when an officer suddenly came in and informed us that the whole of his regiment was in the jungle, bordering upon a state of starvation.

The British army, as previously remarked, had that morning changed position, and this officer's regiment (49th N. I.) had been told off for rear guard duty. Owing to the quantity of baggage some time elapsed in removing tents, ammunition, &c., clear from the ground; so rear guard duty was no sinecure in those days. When our new guest entered our Christmas banquet-hall the night had well commenced, consequently, the reader may guess that the officers on rear duty were by no means in an enviable position. Not for a moment doubting but that we could easily discover the hungry sentinels, Lake and I quitted the merry scene, and quickly packed up a large hamper, containing eatables, and the wherewithal to wash them down, intending to visit the unfortunate rear-guard ourselves.

Our horses were soon ready, and with a suitable retinue in case of accidents, we started on our nocturnal expedition. The night was intensely dark, even with torches we could scarcely trace the road; in fact, as we proceeded, obstacles continually kept checking our progress, and we often lost the track, wandering some way through the dense jungle. To make matters worse, our

informer had misdirected us; however, by extraordinary good fortune, we succeeded after a most unpleasant ramble in reaching the British camp. It was then about three o'clock in the morning, the ride had been a bitterly cold one, but that which annoyed us most was the having failed in discovering the quarters of the rear-guard, besides losing an excellent dinner into the bargain. However, we had cause to congratulate ourselves upon our safe arrival in friendly quarters, for it appears miraculous that Moolraj's picquets did not capture at least some of our party. The artillery mess had not yet broken up, and a few convivial spirits were still toasting absent friends, so we speedily joined them in that same cheerful ceremony. It was too late to think of returning home that night, so we accepted a shake-down kindly offered by a hospitable friend.

The fatigues of the night made me sleep most soundly, and in this happy state of oblivion I might have remained, doubtless, for many an hour longer, had I not been disturbed by the loud report of a gun, which resembled a sharp thunder clap. On jumping hurriedly up from the bed, I ascertained that the gun lately fired was to proclaim to the slumbering warriors that daylight had appeared. At first there arose a faint idea that the enemy had attacked our camp, for naturally enough it had escaped my memory that we were now

residing in the quarters of civilized soldiers. The return home did not occupy much time, and we found all the European portion of the camp safe and fast in the friendly embraces of the drowsy god; with the exception of a few early risers, who were largely indenting upon the soda-water magazine, which clearly demonstrated that the party whose society we abruptly left the previous evening for a midnight roam through the jungles, had been a jovial one. At breakfast we had to stand a heavy discharge of jokes, but the fact was we were unintentionally sold a bargain.

The following day the second siege commenced in earnest; but previous to the enemy retiring from the suburbs many casualties occurred on both sides. The Seikhs made a stout resistance, but were eventually driven back, the 60th Royal Rifles performing great execution. The numerous gardens and brick buildings surrounded by substantial walls, and well concealed from view by large mango trees, afforded very secure shelter for Moolraj's soldiers. The raised hillocks of ground, ruined villages, and dilapidated mosques or temples, were always stoutly defended, and on approaching within a short distance of the city wall, repeated sorties were made by the besieged; but though gallantly conducted, they never once succeeded in their attempts, and were always compelled to beat a precipitate retreat,

suffering severe loss. It was during an attack of this description that M'Mahon brought himself into notice. A gigantic Seikh leader, confident in his superior physical strength, rushed furiously down upon the gallant volunteer, (who by-the-bye stood little more than four feet odd without his shoes or stockings.) The Seikh came with such an impetus, that M'Mahon fell to the ground, but in falling he had the presence of mind to cut at his huge adversary. Luckily the sword hewed the Seikh across the eyes, and that too with such precision and force, as most materially to affect his optics, and he fell prostrate at the feet of his little antagonist. Our men did not permit the wounded man much breathing time, and in the twinkling of an eye, literally hacked him to pieces. M'Mahon was slightly wounded on the thumb in this encounter. Moolraj's soldiers fought with a determination and spirit worthy of a better cause; throughout the war they evinced great courage in obstinately defending every post capable of obstructing even for a moment our advance. Round shot and shells were perpetually whizzing through the air day and night, falling in all directions amongst and through the devoted houses of the city.

By night the shells assumed a magnificent appearance, resembling so many shooting stars, though, alas! far more formidable. One day a number of us were

viewing the scene of destruction from a battery erected on the summit of a high hill. Whilst we anxiously observed the amount of damage committed by the shells, there arose suddenly from the centre of the fort, what at first appeared to us a huge mound of earth, which gradually increased in size until it resembled a hill some 600 feet in height, then it almost imperceptibly changed and assumed the appearance of an excessively dark thunder cloud, which eventually spread far and wide, concealing both fort and town from our wonder-struck gaze; a few minutes elapsed and it entirely enveloped the high position we were occupying, although 900 yards from the explosion. This terrific catastrophe originated in one of our shells fortunately bursting in a powder magazine, containing several tons of combustible ammunition. The sublime spectacle that ensued will never be effaced from my memory, nor, I imagine from that of any who witnessed the sight. For several minutes the atmosphere continued very close, not even a breath of wind stirring, but a death-like stillness prevailed, precisely similar to that which precedes a Scinde dust storm. All the guns ceased firing—all eyes were directed upwards, gazing with awe at the scene thus suddenly presented them. Men even addressed each other in a whisper, for this was indeed no child's play. Moolraj was the first to remind us that we had not yet

contrived to possess ourselves of his citadel, and he unequivocally convinced his opponents that he still had guns and powder, by firing several rounds from his largest piece in rapid succession. Once more the shot, shell, bullets, and steel went to work, and with renewed vigour.

After the cloud of dust occasioned by the late explosion had disappeared, it was discovered that the damage resulting therefrom was not so extensive as had at first been anticipated. Several lives must have been sacrificed, and one large mosque had been utterly destroyed. The walls on one side of the fortress were so shattered, that a breach, no doubt, might have been found; whilst several houses in the town came down by the run. As usual in these cases, some laughable scenes and sayings emanating from the wittiest, amused the spectators. A fine opportunity now occurred for the natives to indulge in their characteristic amusement of stretching the long bow. They swore by their prophet's beard, that the entire fort, city, and suburbs had vanished; however, when the dust had cleared away, and the fortress again became visible, they contented themselves by expressing their firm conviction, that they had discerned through the cloud several human heads, feet, and hands, twisting and twirling in the air. One individual of the party must have possessed a pair of

Sam Weller's "double pair of million magnifying miscroscopes;" for, according to his assertions, he discovered one of the æronauts to have attached to his leg an immense iron chain.

This mild tale proved too indigestible even for a nigger, and the narrator was set down as an incorrigible liar. The accused, doubtless, had little regard for the truth, but his companions were in all probability worse than himself. A day or two after the explosion the city walls were stormed. The breach constructed by the Bengal Artillery was worthy to be mounted, the gallant Bombay 1st Fusiliers leading the way up in noble style. The breach formed by the Bombay Artillery proved impracticable, owing to a sunken ditch, or some unseen obstacle.

On entering the shattered city, now sadly deserted whilst the streets were miserably filthy, one could not help feeling for the wretched inhabitants who had been obliged to remain within the walls. Aged men with long grey beards, lads in the prime of life, together with a few women, were weltering in their crimson gore; whilst some of the bodies lay buried in the deep mud that had collected and been suffered to remain in the streets. Most of the deceased owed their untimely fate to our shells. But to describe such heart-rending scenes of bitter anguish, can afford no pleasure to the reader.

Wives and mothers, the very pictures of unutterable woe, were struggling through the slimy mud in search of their husbands or other near relations. The ghastly corpses were already denuded of all clothing, and with wide gaping wounds presented a most appalling spectacle. Horses, donkeys, and camels, crawled along or sunk on the ground to die where they fell, their carcases filling the air with a horrible effluvia. In many of the houses, particularly those of two or three stories, several of Moolraj's soldiers met their death; too late to escape out of the town, the poor fellows barricaded the doors, and entertaining the idea that the victors would offer no quarter, fought with desperation to the last. Here and there in some less frequented locality, a pariah dog might be seen feasting upon a human corpse, and being disturbed from his horrid meal, would reluctantly retreat to a short distance, and then with gory fangs and blood-shot eyes, kept up a low snarling growl until his annoyers had departed, or the dog himself received a bullet in his loathsome carcase; the latter mode of stopping its mouth being generally adopted if a European perceived the creature at his disgusting repast. No spectacle shocks the feelings of a civilised man, more than that of witnessing one of his fellow-creatures being devoured by an animal. The buildings were in a sadly dilapidated state, many were uninhabitable, and

few indeed remained unscathed from the murderous effects of our shells. For a short time after the capture of the city, nearly all the tradespeople deserted their business; however, the generous forbearance of the troops soon restored confidence amongst those who had been hardy enough to reside in their houses during the siege. Long before the termination of the war, those inhabitants who had quitted the city in alarm returned to Mooltan, and carried on business as if nothing had interrupted them.

Dr. Cole established a hospital for all who felt disposed to seek his aid; the wounded prisoners gladly availed themselves of this kindness, and the nourishment, combined with his skill, soon relieved most of the sufferers. In fact, too much praise cannot be bestowed upon our charitable doctor, who strove his utmost to relieve the agony of his patients, no matter whether friend or foe.

CHAPTER IX.

Prize Agents—Moolraj's Army—Spies—Terrible Gunpowder Magazine Explosion—Moolraj Surrenders—Mines Discovered underneath the breaches—Prisoners—Lieutenant Young and his Miners—Moolraj's Villas—Soorujkoond—Moolraj's Trial—His Prison and Death—Sawun Mull's Rule.

THE prize agents now commenced seeking after, and collecting treasure, or whatever valuable property fortune spread in their way, but they did not reap such a profitable harvest as was expected. The wealthier inhabitants, who had escaped from the city ere it fell into the hands of the besiegers, either carried away their property with them, or buried it in some secure place of concealment that defied all chances of discovery. Occasionally a "ready made mine," as the European soldiers termed a hidden box of gold, would be dug up. Silks and satins were collected, besides a variety of other articles, including a quantity of brass utensils. Manifold were the localities wherein the people concealed their treasure; some would insert 3,000 or 4,000 rupees

in a hole, neatly excavated in the wall of their house; others preferred throwing their money down a well. In fact, to describe all, or even nearly half of the places devised for the concealment of property, would occupy a whole book.

The troops on city duty were now provided with comfortable quarters; those guarding the gates resided in very commodious and snug habitations, in comparison with the tents that had only half sheltered them for the last five or six months. The city having fallen, active preparations were made towards capturing the citadel. I obtained a lovely view of the fort previous to its destruction, and it really looked beautiful; its clean white wall decked here and there with dark green trees was so pretty, that the gazer could not refrain from lamenting over its coming fate. The white smoke from the guns, gracefully curling over the ramparts, added to the picturesque effect.

A few days previous to the surrender of the garrison, a heavy shower of rain fell, continuing for a couple of days. The trenches and works were saturated with water, rendering their occupation extremely unhealthy for the soldiers, both European and native, besides being excessively uncomfortable for those who had to take up their nocturnal quarters in them. Fortunately, only a few cases of dysentery had made their appearance, when

the rain ceased, and fine cold bracing weather, to the joy of all, superseded it. The invalids rapidly recovered, and the hospitals were soon cleared of their patients.

The artillery succeeded in maintaining their high reputation; their admirable practice drew forth considerable commendation. The shells were directed with such precision, that few struck the earth without bursting, consequently, the execution performed by these terrific missiles may easily be conceived, nor do I believe in the centre of the fort a spot could be detected, a yard square, that had not been visited by a shell. Her Majesty's 60th rifles annoyed the enemy vastly; not a man inside the fort dared to expose even his little finger. The damage and loss of life sustained by the besieged, has never yet been accurately ascertained.

The native accounts are so false, their exaggerated statements all differing so widely from each other, that it was almost impossible to become acquainted with the real facts of the case. We, however, adopted what was calculated the most accurate and feasible mode of discovering what number of troops Moolraj, at particular periods, entertained, and the casualties that occurred amongst them. Even with our own people, we never obtained a correct list of the killed and wounded; many of the soldiers had an aversion to the English mode of prescribing for sick patients, consequently, they kept

away from the hospital, and concealed their illness. Having procured some papers that had been in the possession of Moolraj's Quarter-Master General (if I may be allowed to use that title with respect to a nigger), the daily quantity of rations served out to his soldiers, was discovered from these documents. But even this was by no means satisfactory, and the conclusion arrived at, after a vast deal of trouble, could not be relied on.

In the first place, the contractor, who supplied the commissariat department, was a consummate scoundrel, possessed of vast wealth, principally realized by means of deep cunning and roguery. This individual, prosperous though he had been in worldly speculations, still achieved for himself a bad reputation. The spies, and even prisoners, abused him fearfully, never overlooking an opportunity to detract from his character, and on all occasions, whenever a favourable loophole presented its appearance, there would issue a quiet shot at the detested individual.

From all accounts, when Moolraj attacked our camp at Soorujkoond, rations were only supplied for 8,000 men, but on referring to papers and other authorities, it would appear, that the contractor supplied, daily, 15,000 men with provisions outside the fort. But there cannot exist a doubt as to the falsity of this entry, which is

highly improbable in the first place, for it must be remembered, that Shere Singh had quitted Mooltan only a short time previous to the action of Soorujkoond, and marched to the assistance of his father, Chutter Singh. We may reasonably calculate that, not only did Shere Singh's soldiers follow their master, but several recruits were induced to embrace the Rajah's cause, taking this favourable opportunity for escaping from a fort, likely, soon, to be surrounded by a numerous foe. Moreover, spies informed us that, during the seven days fighting, from the 1st to the 7th November, a reserve force, in rear of the enemy's entrenchments, consisting of about 3,000 men, remained within the citadel, whilst nearly a similar number occupied the city and its suburbs; only a few picquets were posted in the various villages or gardens in the neighbourhood of the town.

Now, according to the above calculations, one would imagine that Moolraj's army consisted of some 22,000 men, a number his force never arrived at from the commencement to the termination of the rebellion. I think the following statement may be considered a fair estimate of Moolraj's army. I now refer to the period when Soorujkoond was attacked by the enemy.

Let us allow 9,000 men to have guarded the entrenchments, though, by the way, this number may be overrated by as many as 1,000. Then, suppose 1,000 of

Moolraj's best and most faithful soldiers remained to garrison the citadel, whilst 2,000 occupied the city and environs; this would give him, in all, about 12,000 fighting men. Now, with such conflicting accounts, the reader can perceive how difficult it is to obtain the actual number of casualties that occurred amongst the rebels. Take, for instance, the affair of the grand explosion, the reports at first promulgated were misrepresented and absurdly false; some individuals, direct from the spot where the catastrophe took place, distinctly, and without hesitation, asserted that 1,500 people had been blown up, their shattered limbs and bodies being scattered all over the fort and city. This number, on the following morning, dwindled down to 1,000, and from 1,000 it would decrease to 800, until finally it fluctuated between 300 and 600 casualties. But making allowances for native exaggeration, I fancy we should find that not more than 300 men were killed and wounded by the igniting of the powder magazine.

The reader, however, must bear in mind the perverse prevarications indulged in by Eastern people, so that, after all, little reliance can be placed in their assertions.

A spy, for some pecuniary remuneration, would, in order to please his employer, inform him that, in such and such a case, the enemy suffered most severely, including, in their list of killed and wounded, many men

of note, holding high rank in Moolraj's service. No doubt these spies imagined (native fashion) that the bloodier the news, the more welcome it would prove to the listener. Another method adopted for obtaining information was as singular as it was novel.

Spies were entertained with the understanding, that it was their duty to inform us of what was going forward in Moolraj's camp, whilst on the other hand they were permitted to return unmolested to Mooltan, perfectly at liberty to convey to the Dewan whatever news they had gathered during their residence in our quarters. Strange to say, these "Jacks on both sides," generally speaking, could be more relied on than those supposed to be serving only one master. Whilst on the subject of spies, it may be as well to mention, that there remains no doubt as to Moolraj, Shere Singh and his father being able to procure superior information during the war than the English. But the reason is obvious. A spy bringing important information to any of the Seikh commanders, immediately received a reward commensurate with the intelligence—for instance, a valuable shawl or sword, or maybe 100 rupees was frequently bestowed upon an informer. But our English generals, I fancy, were not so liberal towards spies, and seldom remunerated them with more than ten or twenty rupees, no matter how important the inform-

ation might have been; in fact, on some particular occasions, perhaps a very paltry present would be offered to a man, who had literally risked life and limb in obtaining the news for which he reaped so scanty a harvest.

But to return to the siege, which was now rapidly drawing to a termination. For three or four days previous to the surrender of the fortress, Moolraj frequently dispatched his vakeel to General Whish, but the only answer returned was "Unconditional surrender."—The General merely informing him that he had no power over his life.

"Will you protect my wives and family?" asked the Dewan.

The General contented himself by replying that the British only waged war against men, and never molested women. However, Moolraj, deceitful to a degree himself, would not be convinced of the General's sincerity, and hesitated to surrender the fort. Our shells and shot meanwhile were committing fearful havoc, and by the afternoon of the 21st January, 1849, the Engineer Officers reported both breaches practicable. A few hours previous, two mines had been fired with great success, and at last all was prepared for the storming party.

The General resolved to attack the citadel on the

following morning. The weather proved most unpropitious for the stormers, as it had been raining during the night, and still continued drizzling. Those who were present on that eventful occasion can never erase from their memories the dismal and wretched appearance of the trenches. The soldiers were shivering with cold, though at the same time ready and anxiously expecting to receive the order to charge up the breach, which, by-the-bye, was afterwards discovered to be knee deep in mud, owing to the rain. Dreadful would have been the consequences had we stormed the fort, and we have every reason to believe that a fearful loss of life would have been the result. That the brave Europeans, assisted by their native comrades, would have carried all before them was considered as certain, though of course many a gallant warrior would fall ere the fort passed into our hands.

The enemy's outer fortifications were by no means contemptible—several mines were laid and ready for immediate explosion; beneath both breaches well constructed mines were discovered, containing large quantities of combustible matter, whilst a couple of desperate men lay concealed under ground, resolving to die for their unfeeling master. Besides these preparations for resisting the British, Moolraj had mounted four guns so as to enfilade the breaches, and these batteries were

further strengthened by a ditch excavated in their front, the whole of these internal works being well protected from our artillery. In rear of the first wall another, much higher and almost as strong, had been erected, and in the rear of that again, a formidable loopholed wall had been built, enclosing three or four large mosques, besides other brick buildings, that afforded admirable temporary shelter for those resolute men who were determined to fight to the last. All these preparations might have disturbed the nerves of a weaker foe, but what power can withstand the indomitable courage of British soldiers? There stood the brave sons of dear old England with fixed bayonets, and as impatient to charge up the breach as hounds held in a leash. But the Almighty had mercifully ordained otherwise; the demon of carnage was deprived of his prey, and unwillingly forced to retreat to his own miserable abode. A small white flag was now perceived waving over the ramparts, and a whispered rumour hurriedly spread through the trenches, to the effect that Moolraj had unconditionally surrendered to the General.

The report proved true; crestfallen, and with a countenance upon which suffering, anxiety, and fear were strongly depicted, forth rode Moolraj from under the gateway, and the murderer of our poor countrymen

became a prisoner. Though some time had elapsed since the perpetration of the crime, still justice, though tardy, had at last overtaken the rash and cowardly deed. When we consider Moolraj's detestable conduct, who can refrain from contrasting the treatment he experienced at the hands of the British General? Had the Affghans, or any other native force, been in General Whish's position, instantaneous execution would have followed Moolraj's capture.

On entering the citadel, the artillery were again congratulated by all who witnessed the devastation they had committed, particularly in the interior of the fort. All around appeared in the same state of dilapidation as the town; one or two domed buildings, confidently reckoned upon as shell proof, were perforated through and through with ball, and even Moolraj's own private dwelling was not suffered to escape. The Europeans who first entered the fort were not long in discovering a few chests of beer, which it is needless to state disappeared like a flash of lightning. The treasury fell into the hands of the prize agents. Having cleared the fort of all suspicious characters, a loyal salute was fired in honour of the victory, and a day or two after tranquility was restored, and shopkeepers again resumed their business.

Brigadier Markham nobly sought out the enemy's

wounded, affording them assistance, providing them with food, and obtaining medical aid for those in need of it. The prisoners, with the exception of the principal offenders, were confided to Major Edwardes's care, and a miserable condition the wretched fellows appeared to be in; however, on searching their persons, gold and silver coins, amounting in a few cases to a thousand rupees, were discovered amongst their clothes, or concealed in their long thick hair. The sole of the shoe was a favourite place for secreting the small gold coin issued by the Dewan, and valued at one rupee. Many of our prisoners, on perceiving the strict investigation going forward, buried what treasure they possessed previous to being searched, whereupon several of our own people, who had detected this manœuvre, dug it up again fast enough. All articles of value were taken from the vanquished, who, by-the-bye, after the searching was concluded, were confined in the various temples, buildings, and enclosed gardens that lay scattered about the suburbs. These unfortunate individuals might have numbered between two and three thousand; many, to judge from their miserably lean appearance, must have fasted longer than the faculty would deem consistent with the demands of nature. But, it should be observed, that no sooner were they confided to Edwardes's care, than the utmost endeavours were used to alleviate their

sufferings, and render them tolerably comfortable; nor were they long kept in confinement, for each person receiving a rupee, was permitted to depart, and go where he liked. Certainly a few, too proud to accept any gift from their conquerors, refused the pecuniary assistance proffered them, and when the brave fellows were compelled to surrender their weapons, it was really beautiful to see the noble expression that accompanied the action; it was a look that seemed to say "Had we been consulted, you should have decimated the whole of us ere you took possession of the fort." Yes, none could help feeling for our vanquished foe.

Thus ended this ever to be remembered siege—a siege conducted with consummate skill and energy. All branches of the united services deserved their meed of praise, but particularly the artillery; nor must the sappers and miners pass unnoticed here. Lieutenant Young, of the Bengal Engineers, received charge of General Cortlandt's own miners, and that officer frequently expressed his approbation of the men under his command, remarking that they were always willing—and, in fact, anxious—to gain a knowledge of their duty, which on all occasions they performed with alacrity and cheerfulness. They moreover seemed to enjoy the idea of having a Company's Officer placed over them to superintend their work. Young, shortly after the ter-

mination of the siege, was ordered off into the district, for the purpose of reducing a native fort not far distant from the city of Dera Ghazee Khan; on his arrival, he displayed so much activity as to discourage and perplex the besieged, who capitulated without any severe fighting, having heard, no doubt, of the successes lately achieved at Mooltan by the English troops.

The gardens and summer-houses in the neighbourhood of Mooltan were very superior to those met with in Scinde. The inhabitants certainly displayed greater taste in laying out their grounds; the walks were neatly raised, and the drainage arrangements could not have been better. The rose trees were magnificent, being larger and the flowers more odoriferous than the generality of Indian plants.

After the fall of the fort, my brother fortunately succeeded in establishing himself in one of the ex-Dewan's suburban villas. The residence he selected was tolerably comfortable, particularly the vaulted chamber underground, in the centre of which was a small well, containing deliciously cool water. This room must have been a perfect paradise to the half parched-up European during the hot weather, but after all, comfortable though it may be for a time, it is not considered healthy, the atmosphere being of too humid a nature. The canal at the end of the garden enabled us to indulge in the

luxury of a swimming bath, though the water was not exactly as clear as crystal; but in this respect it only resembled all the canals in Scinde and the Punjab, none of which are famous for clear water. Pomegranate, mango, and apple trees flourish luxuriantly in the Mooltan gardens; no doubt cotton might be extensively cultivated, the produce would amply remunerate the sower.

The jungle in the vicinity chiefly consists of low jhow shrubs and coarse grass, the latter affording good pasturage for the cattle. Water is easily obtained for the purposes of irrigation, owing to the vicinity of the river, so in all probability, now that the Company rules the country, a quantity of this hitherto waste soil, may at the present time be under cultivation. Once or twice the village of Soorujkoond has been brought before the reader's attention, so he may as well be informed at once, that it is a small place situate about five miles to the south of Mooltan. It is held in much reverence by the natives, who consider it a holy shrine, and worthy of a pilgrimage; the latter was Moolraj's belief, and in his palmy days he frequently visited the locality. The village itself contains merely a few houses, and these are principally occupied by holy fakeers, Anglice beggars, who during the war, perhaps concealed as well as encouraged several of the spies

of the enemy. A large tank tastefully constructed in Oriental style, is situated in the centre, with porcelain steps leading down to the water's edge. This pool of water proved a great boon to our sable soldiers, but the water appeared so dreadfully dirty and greasy, that no European, however fatigued, could ever have been induced to bathe his limbs in the slimy element. Some beautiful neem-trees hung gracefully over this bath, and during the heat of the day, hundreds of long-bearded warriors might have been seen congregated together underneath the shade, discussing, no doubt, the chances of the war.

Shortly after the termination of the siege, Edwardes commenced disbanding his army; many returned to their homes, and resumed their agricultural pursuits, some were retained in the Company's service, whilst, no doubt, several of the restless spirits went in search of a fresh field of adventure. By degrees all dispersed in various directions, until finally, like a soap bubble, the entire force vanished without noise or disturbance of any kind. With respect to the fort, a regiment of Bombay N. I. was ordered to garrison it, but the quarters given up for the officers were not very enviable ones, and certainly not half so comfortable as those occupied by the officers of another corps, who were residing in capacious cantonments within a mile of the city.

Commissioners and other civil servants now arrived in numbers, and English law was the order of the day. Thus this famous and ancient city changed masters for the third time within a period of fifty years. However, an important and solemn duty yet devolved upon the authorities—the mouldering remains of our poor countrymen had to be disinterred, in order to give them Christian burial. I much regretted that other duties prevented me from attending these melancholy obsequies; for, from all accounts, it must have been an affecting ceremony—when carrying the mutilated bodies up the breach, how the brave hearts that followed in the mournful procession must have palpitated as they ascended the slope constructed by their own guns! A feeling of satisfied vengeance must have pervaded every breast, on reflecting that a terrible punishment had been meted out to the murderer. It is needless for the admirers of Moolraj (and he possessed not a few, be it said to their shame) to endeavour to vindicate his conduct regarding the fearful crime imputed to him; the murderer was tried at Lahore, and the evidence there produced against him proved too damning and clear, to allow of the existence of even the shadow of a doubt with respect to his guilt. The very fact of his remunerating with valuable presents the chief assassin, a low-bred scoundrel, alone condemns him.

His defence, undertaken by an officer in the Company's service was cleverly put together, and no doubt, with good intention towards the acquittal of the prisoner; but when the murderer is styled a victim of circumstances, no one in his senses can any longer coincide with the worthy advocate. As to his being a victim of circumstances, why, more or less, all murderers may plead that some particular accident compelled them to commit the deed. Let us imagine, for instance, by way of argument, that a quarrel springs up between two individuals, and the dispute terminates by one of the belligerents, whom we will suppose to have been intoxicated, felling his antagonist to the ground, from the effects of which blow the man dies; the prisoner in his defence states that he was intoxicated when he struck the blow, therefore he was a victim of circumstances.

Again, a man envies his neighbour's riches, and to possess himself of the same, murders the present possessor. The reader can form his own opinion whether such arguments as the above would avail the prisoner aught before an English jury. But it must be remembered that Moolraj never indulged in intoxicating liquors or drugs; in fact, he was allowed to be of very abstemious habits. No, the truth was this, he felt unwilling to surrender his fort, and governorship of

Mooltan. Two British officers had arrived at his own request to receive charge of the country, as well as all official papers appertaining to the government of the Mooltan district, and containing, as was supposed, several important statistical documents. Moolraj may have been over hasty in his request, but Government at once acceded to his wishes, and immediately made arrangements for relieving the Dewan of his governorship. However, on the arrival of the officers appointed to supersede him, the Dewan regretted that he had ever written to Lahore, requesting to be permitted to resign his appointment, one moreover, that had been held in his family for many years.

On hearing that the Lahore Durbar had taken him at his word, he became perplexed and annoyed at their celerity; all further correspondence on the subject would be perfectly useless, and the only mode that occurred to him of retaining his office, was that of murdering the unsuspecting officers, who, at the murderer's own request, had been dispatched to relieve him of his duties. Was such a man, reader, the victim of circumstances? No reasonable person could ever for a moment advance such an opinion. Who cannot recal the bitter rage, and universal cry for vengeance that predominated over the entire of India, when intelligence reached the various stations that our two countrymen had been murdered in

cold blood? No punishment was deemed too severe for Moolraj; the vilest epithets were attached to his name, and all sincerely trusted that the Dewan might be captured, and put to an ignominious death. Yet, like the calm after a storm, these angry feelings lulled, and because Moolraj held out against General Whish longer than had been anticipated, he, who only a few weeks previously had been considered and reviled as a cold-blooded murderer, was now admired for his courage, and to complete the farce, finally became a "victim of circumstances;" although through his instrumentality, many devoted English soldiers were destroyed by his guns, in addition to his former crime. Had his own soldiers forcibly imprisoned him, and by threats of death, if he refused, coerced him to give consent to the murder, then indeed there might have been some reason in the argument of his being the victim of circumstances. Many might then feel disposed to look with less harshness upon the case. But still, when we remember the confidence reposed in Moolraj's faith, besides his own tender of the resignation of the Mooltan country, all must allow that he should never have permitted himself to attain the position of a victim of circumstances. His honor (if he had any) was at stake; and rather than suffer that sacred treasure to have been polluted, he should have adopted measures for protecting his confid-

ing guests to the best of his endeavours, if need were, even with his life.

The British, as usual, dwelt very leniently towards this great offender against their dignity, imprisonment in comfortable and well-ventilated quarters being the only punishment assigned to the rebel. I frequently met him in Fort William, Calcutta; but he appeared a morose-looking savage, and with down cast eyes, shuffled rather than walked hastily past, whenever he came in contact with people connected with the fort. During his residence in the fort, he was allowed to enjoy daily exercise for an hour or so, every morning and evening. This pedestrian exercise was confined to the precincts of the fort, and an European, as well as a Native guard, always attended him on these occasions. His late reverses no doubt undermined his constitution, and his health gradually gave way, until his complaint became alarming; and medical men recommended change of air, as the only remedy for restoring the prisoner to health. A steamer was conveying him up the river, but on arriving at Benares, Moolraj quietly breathed his last. Thus ended the career of a man who, had he refrained from political affairs, might have led a happy and long life. He possessed vast wealth, and was I believe, a favourite with the Mooltanes, who to this day insist that their late Dewan was not guilty of the heinous

crime imputed to him. He is dead, and long ere this has been summoned into the presence of a Judge, who requires not the testimony of witnesses to prove the innocence or guilt of any mortal. Alas, for Moolraj! He, I fear has much to answer for. The commerce of Mooltan of course suffered considerably during the siege, though eventually, no doubt it will regain its former importance. When Runjeet Singh besieged and captured Mooltan, his Sirdars and Military officers obtained immense wealth, forcibly extracted from the inhabitants; in fact all reaped such a harvest as I have been informed on good authority, that the Seikh Rajahs owe their opulence to the siege. The Mooltan silks and shawls were famous throughout Hindostan for their superior manufacture, and merchants from nearly every city in the Peninsular trafficked with the inhabitants. The Affghans, Beloochees, and Cutchee people likewise carried on a brisk trade with the Mooltanes, and no doubt continue to do so at the present day. The Kaffilahs proceeding *via* Dera Ishmael Khan, formerly complained sadly of the arbitrary exactions they were subjected to, owing not only to the avarice of Dost Mahommed, but also to that of the petty commanders of districts, through which the merchants were obliged to travel. The population of Mooltan, previous to the siege of 1848—9, has been variously estimated; some asserting that the town

contained fully sixty thousand inhabitants, whilst others estimated the number of souls at about thirty thousand; so perhaps forty-five thousand may be about the mark. The Mooltan district has always been a valuable gem in the Punjab territories, and the various princes who have visited the country of the Five Rivers, have always been ambitious to possess themselves of the much desired town and fort, which, owing to its commanding position, as well as traffic, attracted great attention. Sawun Mull, the predecessor and father of Moolraj, was a great favorite. According to the native traditions, his rule must have been remarkably mild; his ideas of justice coincided with those of his subjects, and his generosity in rewarding deserving characters, was equal to his wealth, which was declared to be enormous. A splendid and costly tomb was erected to the memory of Sawun Mull, but I fear it was much defaced by shot and shell. The amount of Mooltan revenue, according to Runjeet Singh, during Sawun Mull's rule, amounted to no less than forty lacs of rupees annually. The army kept up at Mooltan was comparatively a small one; hence the vast accumulation of wealth gathered by Sawun Mull, who should, according to the Maharajah's mandate, have maintained 10,000 soldiers, whereas the Dewan deemed 3,000 more than sufficient. Many years ago, it is supposed that Mooltan was peopled principally by Mussul-

men, and there still exist traces of old Mahometan tombs. The climate round Mooltan, though salubrious, is by no means an agreeable one; the heat for several months of the year is perfectly dreadful, and as rain seldom visits this part of the earth, an unusal amount of dust prevails. The dust storms are of frequent occurrence, and while they last, rage furiously, tearing up large trees from the hard soil. Water is found within ten feet of the surface of the earth.

CHAPTER X.

Affairs in the North of the Punjab—Taylor's Expedition—Takes Lukkee Fort—Another Expedition starts for Bunnoo—Crossing the Doâb—Leia—Bukker—Esakhyle—Lukkee—Fly Nuisance—River Karroom Expedition starts for Dera—Peyzoo Pass—Affghan Merchants.

Before proceeding, perhaps it would be advisable to take a cursory glance at the aspect of affairs in the north of the Punjab. Since November, alarming intelligence had been daily received, intimating that the entire country was in a disturbed state, and that unless immediate measures were adopted for suppressing this refractory feeling, a general rising of the people would be the result. At about the same time, or a little later, we received intimation that Major and Mrs. Lawrence, and some other British officers, though nominally at liberty, were never the less supposed to be strictly guarded, and in the hands, if not of Chutter Singh, at least of his creatures. Upon these reports being confirmed beyond all doubt, we naturally became anxious

for the safety of the prisoners. The cruelties and harsh treatment that Asiatics frequently inflict on those who happen to fall into their power, increased our fears, and innumerable were the schemes that Edwardes and Taylor planned for their release. Finally, it was decided, on the latter's own suggestion, that having selected a picked body of men, all of whom could be depended on, Taylor should immediately hasten towards the direction where the prisoners were supposed to be held in surveillance.

Such a chivalric spirit, worthy of Richard Coeur de Lion, might have been expected from one of Lieutenant Taylor's humane and gallant disposition. It was about the commencement of November, that this bold little party of mounted cavaliers proceeded on their hazardous enterprise, carrying with them the hearty and sincere good wishes of all. Although Taylor adopted prompt measures, making long and forced marches, the expedition, much to the zealous leader's chagrin, unfortunately did not terminate so prosperously as could have been desired. It was too late, and the party were not sufficiently strong to follow up the pursuit. The old Seikh, Rajah Chutter Singh, had been lavish with his coin, and by means of presents and promises of service, had contrived to corrupt Major Lawrence's guard, who, like all Asiatics, for the sake of "Buckshush," treacherously

surrendered up their charge, and were now conveying their prisoners to the Seikh camp. Of course all attempts to rescue them were now impracticable, at least as far as Taylor was concerned, so here the matter ended. Taylor, however, was not the man to remain long inactive, when all around was in a state of confusion; so with his usual cheerfulness and alacrity to render his services profitable wherever needed, he resolved to visit Bunnoo, and endeavour to settle the disturbances, that were daily increasing to such an extent, as to threaten the peace of that valley.

Bunnoo, previous to Moolraj's outbreak, had been visited by Major Edwardes, and this, hitherto unknown, or only half explored valley, was much benefitted during the administration of that officer. From being in a complete state of barbarism, it was gradually shaking off its savage nature, and assuming a more civilized condition.

Moolraj's rebellion threatened to disturb the further progress of its prosperity, for Edwardes was obliged to quit the country, leaving it without any regular settled laws. As might have been expected in the case of a semi-barbarous race like the Bunnoochees, the Seikh rising afforded them a famous pretext for relapsing into their former lawless habits. This then was the country selected by Lieutenant Taylor as the field for his

labours. His energy and zeal soon enabled him to raise a force, consisting of about 1,500 men, and at the same time he obtained a couple of guns, with a small quantity of ammunition for the use of the same. Both guns were in a very corroded state, in fact, almost unserviceable. Taylor, however, was perfectly aware of the dangers resulting from delay, so he resolved to march immediately upon Lukkee, where a small number of insurgents held out. Lukkee is a large village, situate on the right bank of the river Kurroom. The fort is erected on the opposite side of the water, and against this stronghold, Taylor was anxious first to point his force.

On arriving before the place, the garrison evinced their readiness to enter into negotiations, by dispatching a deputation to Taylor; but their demands were so absurd, that Taylor would not consent, or, at last, even listen to any of their proposals, until the fort had been vacated, and he himself placed in possession. The deputation returned, apparently not over elated at their reception; one or two more interviews were granted, but were all attended with the same result as the former, until Taylor, perceiving that the enemy were not likely to come to any satisfactory terms, commenced *via armis* to carry his own way.

The siege was now begun in earnest, trenches exca-

vated, a battery for the two guns erected, and the round shot were soon rattling up against the walls. The enemy's artillery was vastly superior and better manned than that of the besiegers; however, talent soon achieved what force could not, for the garrison, on beholding the trenches approaching nearer and nearer the fort every day, became intimidated, and surrendered at discretion, after only holding out for a few days. Having Lukkee in his possession, Taylor soon contrived to maintain tolerable peace in the valley, and, in fact, became rather a popular governor than otherwise, with the neighbouring hill people, and those who had lately risen up in arms against him.

The principal men resorted to his camp, and willingly consulted him relative to the future management of the district. Gradually, the hill frontier inhabitants were induced to desist from carrying on their marauding expeditions, and finally settled down quietly in villages, where agricultural employment was given them. Thus, in a very short period, by dint of able management and affable conduct, even the wildest of these robber tribes were persuaded to lead a more honorable life. Lieutenant Pearce, of the Madras artillery, had, in the mean time, been marching towards Bunnoo, in charge of six guns and a guard of sowars, for the purpose of assisting Taylor in reducing fort Lukkee. However, owing to

the threatening attitude assumed by Dost Mahommed's army, and the wavering conduct of a few hill tribes, Edwardes deemed it advisable to reinforce the Bunnoo detachments. Accordingly, Lieutenant Pollock, Doctor Cole, M'Mahon, and myself, were ordered to proceed forthwith towards Bunnoo. We were accompanied by a force about 3,000 strong, supported by fourteen guns, including a couple of mortars and a howitzer. Ample ammunition was provided for the whole. On reaching Bunnoo, I was placed in charge of General Cortlandt's two regiments, the Soorujmooke (my pet corps) and the Kuttar Mookee.

On starting from Mooltan, my health, which for the last two months had been very bad, was now such that the doctor recommended me to return, but this I refused to do, and resolved to remain with the expedition. Our first day's march from Mooltan proved very unpleasant. In the first place the river Chenab had to be crossed, and we were unable to procure a sufficient number of boats, for conveying the troops and baggage over to the opposite bank. The great breadth and rapidity of the stream added much to our long detention. The operation had occupied us all day, and, to complete our discomfiture, half of us lost our way and were some time in discovering the camp ground. We made but a poor meal that evening, for the bazaar, with its supplies, had likewise

wandered astray; but in a couple of days all were in marching trim, and a regular system was maintained, whereby we contrived, with a few exceptions, to obtain abundance wherewith to satisfy the appetite; the material, though not luxurious, still being wholesome and nourishing. The first day's march, even with a regular regiment, in India is always an unsatisfactory one. The servants, perhaps, are unable to set up their masters' tents, pegs may be wanting, besides a variety of other little difficulties and wants, that are only discovered at the last moment. A couple of days on the line of march rectifies these deficiencies. Our march as we advanced increased in interest, and our young spirits were continually kept in the ascendant, by anxiously expecting to have a brush with some foe, who might feel disposed to dispute our route. So confident were we in our own powers, that of course each individually considered himself capable of leading into action an army 100,000 strong.

At first a happy state of excitement prevailed in our camp, owing to the probability of the Seikhs dispatching a force to intercept our advance, but we were disappointed in this expectation. No foe obliged us with a visit; no laurels were gained.

Our march across the Doab was not altogether a disagreeable route, although rather monotonous. The country traversed partook of a sandy nature, it was ra-

ther like a large desert, sprinkled here and there with a few green patches of cultivation, which continued until we reached Leia, on the Indus. The sandy road, as might have been expected, rather tested the workmanship of the guns, and the endurance of the horses; but the energy of the gunners surmounted all obstacles, and the artillery invariably kept up with the remainder of our force. During the first portion of the march, nothing was visible but small sand hillocks, covered with a few stunted shrubs. The clouds of dust obscured the view, so that we frequently arrived at a village without having had any previous intimation of its vicinity. Water was only procurable at certain inhabited spots, consequently the reader may imagine our distress on some occasions, particularly if the road was bad and the distance from one well to another greater than usual, or if any detention occurred on the line of march. The water was very brackish, and once or twice did duty for an emetic; even the soldiers of the country refrained from indulging too much in the water drawn from these desert wells. We were much indebted to Kassin Khan, our commandant of cavalry, who, besides being a fine, spirited young man, possessed a very engaging manner, and as we travelled along, the tediousness of the road was frequently beguiled by his amusing anecdotes of by gone days.

The country we passed through, appeared prolific in

wild adventures. Every fort, or dilapidated remnant of a wall, had some stirring tale connected with the ruin itself, or with its original architect. These old isolated fortresses had a peculiar charm for my romantic brain, and I always inspected them with feelings nearly akin to veneration. How vividly flashed before me the stern features, rude manners and conduct of the wild robbers who formerly constituted the garrison of these now decayed strongholds. In wandering through the rough halls and climbing over the rugged ramparts of the deserted building, a melancholy fit would almost unawares steal o'er the gazer's senses; and as the fiery sun slowly retired to rest, how delicious it was to ponder upon the various associations that crowded in a confused heap, one after the other, upon the heated imagination. When we were fortunate enough to encamp in the vicinity of a ruined fort, towards sunset I generally found myself wandering over the neglected apartments, or seated high up on the fragment of a bastion, allowed myself to enjoy a dreamy trance; or may be, in perambulating the ramparts, supposed myself the robber chief. Whilst gazing on the mouldering gateway, one almost expected to perceive the bold chieftain ambling past on his horse, being salaamed by the armed warriors, who were now assembled under the archway to greet the arrival of their lord. Doubtless the old man has returned from a successful predatory

excursion. How easy to follow him to the audience hall, when squatted on a rude mat, or may be reclining against a heap of skins and furs, the hero of a hundred fights, surrounded by a few chosen followers, relates tales connected with his former lawless exploits. His long grizzly beard flows majestically down to the waist, but age has so thinned what once was an impenetrable screen, that the huge scars are visible upon his withered neck and wrinkled brow. These deep wounds sufficiently bear witness to the wearer's courage, and clearly prove that all his depredations were not committed with impunity.

Turn we now to the retainers—verily they constitute a motley throng. All have been accustomed from their infancy to brave the dangers of their wild profession. Continually habituated to handle their tulwars, even now though securely sheltered in their own stronghold, none of those turbulent spirits have deemed it discreet to unbuckle their weapons. How interesting must have been their conversation, what numerous escapes by "land and flood" were they narrating to each other. How waggishly would they jest over some booty, just unexpectedly obtained from a party of cowardly itinerant merchants; or may be some were lamenting over the failure of an ill-managed foray, upon which occasion several of their relations or comrades met with an untimely end. Then again would imagination change the scene. Behold

the daring little garrison hemmed in on all sides, pushed to the utmost extremity by a savage force ten times its own strength. The besiegers, exasperated beyond measure, listen to no terms; they refuse quarter and at last storm the fort. The old robber, supported by his faithful retainers, takes his stand underneath the gateway, resolved to perish at his post like a true-hearted chief. The woodwork, unable to withstand the pressure from without, gives way, a breach is effected, and in rush the excited mass. Vainly does the bold chief strive his utmost to check the course of the stormers, all efforts are futile, and, finally, his body is discovered amongst a heap of slain, covered with wounds and saturated with blood. Again shifts the scene. I am awakened from my reverie by the discordant whining of a servant, who brings information that the "beer shrab" is cool, and would master be pleased to imbibe some.

In crossing the Doâb, we frequently encountered small patches of cultivation, varying in extent from perhaps one to twenty acres. The crops, however, seldom appeared to be healthy, in fact, it needed not much investigation to detect the sluggardly manner in which the land had been treated, though the cultivators themselves declared the barrenness of the soil to proceed wholly from the effects of the sun and want of irrigation. Our friend Kassim Khan, however, assured us that the

real fact was, that in most cases these patches of cultivation were in the possession of thieves and dissolute characters, who, for the purpose of deceiving Government into the belief that they were respectable labourers, annually sowed a few seeds to keep up appearances. Formerly this deception might have succeeded, but since the British have held the reins of government, I imagine the Doâb has been considerably cleared of these lazy vagabonds. A couple of huts, and perhaps a dilapidated shed, formed what is called a desert farm, but the buildings were in such a miserable state of decay, that very few appeared habitable even for dogs. One low stunted tree, not bearing foliage enough to screen a cat, generally languished over the well, which in some instances was dried up. Occasionally a man made himself visible, but if there were any women or children they kept themselves very close, and during our visit must have resided *under* in lieu of *upon* the estate. As for the ground itself, the natural conviction of any person who went over it would be, that no trouble whatever was bestowed upon its tillage, and weeds were permitted to thrive as luxuriantly as the corn, grain, or other produce.

This style of country was not very entertaining, the same bleak and dreary scenery continuing for miles and miles; nor did we meet with many travellers, as the passage across

this portion of the desert was considered a dangerous one, unless a large kaffila assembled together of sufficient strength to beat off any freebooters who frequented the wilds. We were all glad when we reached Leia, a large and flourishing city, situate on the left or eastern bank of the Indus. We halted for a day at this place in order to refresh our men and cattle, who were rather knocked up after their sandy march. Leia might almost be denominated a Hindoo city, although several Mussulmen cultivate the land in the district. The town contains several well-constructed temples and religious buildings, which look picturesque from a distance. The bazaars are clean and tolerably well supplied with provisions, besides carrying on a decent trade with kaffilas from the Affghan provinces. Sugar and flax appeared to be sold in great quantities.

We walked through a few gardens, but they were very paltry ones, and the only redeeming quality they could boast of, was the sweet scent emitted from the jessamine beds. Our soldiers were on the point of a serious quarrel with the inhabitants, originating in a religious dispute; however, it fortunately terminated without any serious result. Pollock and I were seated in our tents, when an orderly hastened up to us, bellowing out, as if for general information, that a tremendous uproar was being carried on in the city. We

immediately proceeded to the scene of strife, and on arriving at about the centre of the main bazaar, perceived a vast multitude noisily engaged in discussing some topic of vital importance. The tumult evidently was between the citizens and our own soldiers; all were armed to the teeth, drawn up within five yards of each other, and only requiring some pretext to commence a general engagement, for they were evidently labouring under great excitement. Our presence was most opportune, for had the combatants been left to themselves, blood no doubt would have been shed. As it was, some time elapsed before Pollock could obtain an audience, for whenever he opened his mouth the turbulent multitude (who wished to speak first), by their loud vociferations, rendered the mediator's words inaudible. Considering that swords were drawn and firelocks prepared for use, our position was by no means an enviable one. There we stood, between two excited factions, who had worked themselves up into such a peppery condition, that neither party seemed willing to listen to the voice of reason. At length Pollock was permitted to address the mob, and with a face as crimson as an angry turkey cock's, requested his listeners would so far oblige him as to separate at once without further noisy demonstrations.

"Why fight," said the orator, "simply on account of

a difference of opinion on religious subjects? Let all men profess what creed they will without molestation. Why interfere with each other's religion?—let each follow his own mode of worship," &c. &c.

As the people cooled down, they felt convinced of the propriety of taking Pollock's advice, so by degrees one and all consented to hush up the matter, by quietly dispersing to their respective dwellings, much impressed with the Sahib's mode of settling a quarrel. The commandant of artillery alarmed at the above proceedings, brought all the heavy guns well to the front, and had assembled all the soldiers left in camp, so we were rather surprised at the sight which greeted our arrival when we returned home. In the hurry of the moment we both neglected to arm ourselves, though as affairs ended so peaceably, it was not of much consequence. However, the native colonel of one of my regiments afterwards rebuked us for being so exceedingly imprudent as to venture amongst an armed mass of disputants without taking precautions for self-defence in case of necessity. "But I've warned you all," continued old Budrinauth, "and if these are the sort of games you purpose carrying on in Bunnoo, your lives will not be of long duration."

This old Kalsa colonel was a Hindoo; but he made terrific indents upon my cheroot box, for the old fellow

was passionately addicted to smoking. I'm not certain whether the colonel didn't prefer the fragrant cheroot to inhaling the adulterated tobacco placed in his hookah. Leia is not a good locality for a sportsman. Doctor Cole, as usual, went out shooting, but his praiseworthy efforts were not attended with much success, as he only knocked over a brace of wild fowl. To tell the truth, we were frequently indebted to our worthy sporting Æsculapius for what appeared on our dinner table. In such an uncivilized part of the Punjab fresh meat was seldom procurable; and as for a round of beef, according to the Seikh laws, we were prohibited from slaughtering oxen. The reader must remember that the country had not yet been annexed to the British dominions. At the present day, of course, this absurd prohibition is done away with; however, there are still certain requisitions relative to the slaughter-houses being situated away from the town, or cantonments. From Leia to Bukkur is three days march. We halted here expecting to obtain a little boar-sticking, so directly after breakfast a large party started for the neighbouring jungle, which the natives assured us swarmed with hog and deer; but we were sadly disappointed in our expectations, for with the exception of two diminutive sucking pigs, not an animal made its appearance. Thoroughly disgusted with our day's sport

we vented our rage upon the wretched little piggies, by worrying them to death with our dogs. To tell the truth, we all felt ashamed of ourselves, and after a lingering glance across the deceptive jungle, we commenced a rapid retreat towards camp; the doctor swearing "it was all humbug, and just like those niggers."

In the evening we inspected the fort, now entirely deserted and sadly out of repair. A dry well afforded us some amusement, and brought our risible faculties well into play. Innumerable pigeons had taken up their abode inside, and having once discovered their nocturnal residence, we resolved to capture as many as possible. Stationing ourselves round the well, all being armed with long sticks, we commenced hostilities. Howls as discordant as ever issued from human throats soon disturbed the feathery slumberers, which in their hasty endeavours to escape, were easily disabled and rendered *hors de combat*, by the fierce shower of blows and stones that rained down upon them with fearful rapidity. Our victims fell in heaps, until at last we were quite fatigued with our exertions, the weather at that time not being exactly suited for such warm work. We lowered a native amidst the wounded, and scarcely could we credit the enormous number of pigeons that

had been killed in the fray. They appeared to be rock or blue pigeons.

Another incident occurred at this place, and is still fresh in my recollection, though perhaps after all it is scarcely worthy of notice. One of our Seikh artillery officers contrived to make himself dreadfully inebriated during the morning's march, and on perceiving me, would insist on my admiring a dance, which he endeavoured to perform, but without success; for his equilibrium not being very secure, our dancer fell to the ground. This gave me an admirable opportunity for escaping from this ludicrous scene, which considering the publicity of the spot, was rather of a disreputable nature. This Seikh was a good honest sort of fellow, so after undergoing a slight "wig," he was taken into favour again. The Seikhs abeminate the tobacco leaf, which they say would defile them were they to smoke it, but though debarred this luxury, they make up for it in the drinking line; the more intoxicating the liquor, the more is it preferred.

The road from Bukkur to Esakhyle presents but few objects of interest,—the villages passed through are small, and cultivation was not over abundant, although some of the wheatfields assumed a promising garb. On arriving at any village, the greatest civility was

bestowed upon us by the headman, who always presented us with some gift, generally a small kid or a delicious draught of fresh milk; eggs and ghee were likewise very often offered. The Kardar on these occasions would invariably be attended by a host of ill-clad ragamuffins, who anxiously squeezed themselves forward to obtain a glimpse of their visitors. Our Kitmutgars, and in fact, all the servants, strove their utmost to compel the villagers to give sheep, &c., free of any charge. Such a disgraceful proceeding was not tolerated for a moment, and when any case came to our knowledge, the offender suffered for his rascality; for though our table attendants obtained articles of consumption free of all cost, by dint of frightening the poor villagers, still, the scoundrels never hesitated for a moment to charge their masters full bazaar price for the same.

Esakhyle is a large and populous village on the right bank of the Indus. The river at this place is very broad, and the navigation intricate on account of numerous rocks, and the rapidity of the current. The boats employed for carrying merchandise, are, perhaps, larger than those built lower down, and differ in shape, being more flat-bottomed, and constructed of stronger material.

During our short residence at Esakhyle we repaired its small fort, and further added to its strength by

digging a ditch round the outer wall; these precautions however, were not necessary, but they gave employment to our sappers and miners, who were rather proud of displaying their newly acquired knowledge to the uninitiated Esakhyle people, who wondered what in the name of fortune we were about, when the trench was being dug. The labourers complained of the frequent attacks they were subjected to from their hill neighbours, who annually made a foray against their cattle and other property. Of course, our presence restored confidence, but on riding six miles into the country, we came across a village that had only lately been visited by a marauding party. The plundered inhabitants were loudly calling down the vengeance of heaven upon their oppressors, but on perceiving our party, they appeared as if undetermined whether to attack us or not; however our white faces dispelled any fears they entertained relative to our intentions, and in a short time a ship load of injuries and complaints was laid before us.

Our camp remained only a few days at Esakhyle, for Taylor ordered the force to join his own. We were delighted at the prospect of quitting the banks of the Indus, for we were anxious to visit the pretty valley of Bunnoo, when no doubt a more active military life would shake off the ennui that now reigned amongst the whole party. The march to Lukkee only occupied a

couple of days, and at first we suspected that Bunnoo was not such a picturesque spot as people had painted it to us, however, though part of the road, particularly in the vicinity of Lukkee was monotonous in the extreme, still in descending through the pass a lovely landscape greeted our sight. At the western entrance of the pass, the shallow river Kurroom flows hurriedly past, as if anxious to escape beyond the dark frown of the hills. We crossed the river first, and were thus enabled to witness the beautiful spectacle of 3,000 men wading across the ford; the artillery and baggage carts were nearly under water, and one or two of the latter conveyances tumbled right over. Taylor's force was now considerably increased, and we were in a position to display a bold front. No foe had the temerity to approach even near the vicinity of camp, but several sharp eyes were constantly on the alert, watching our movements and reporting the same to their masters. Several hill tribes were anxious to molest us, but our party was now far too strong for them.

Lukkee in the year 1849, was by no means an unimportant place, though, owing to the hitherto unsettled government, few large buildings decorated the village. In fact it was simply a village of clean little huts, with a few large barns for preserving grain, and other agricultural produce. If the population still continues

increasing with the same rapidity that it did five years ago, Lukkee must now be a large town. Either Edwardes or Taylor established a school there, and a number of villagers' children daily attended this Bunnoo seminary. Grain, wheat, and a little sugar were the principal productions of the earth,—the former, when in flower, looked very pretty. Mulberry, hoar, and neem trees, though small were scattered all over the valley, which resembled in a great measure an extensive park, when viewed from the hills. Of course we all had a natural curiosity to inspect the fort, so gallantly reduced by Taylor; consequently taking advantage of the dryness of the river's bed, we crossed the Kurroom on horseback, and proceeded to the fortress. The ground in its vicinity was considered insalubrious, consequently no buildings were erected within range of the guns, although the soil was extensively cultivated. Taylor was repairing the walls, and in fact had nearly restored it to its former condition; as for the interior, it only resembled all other native forts, so it would be useless to fatigue the reader by describing its different rooms, ramparts, &c., &c.

Lukkee must be the native country of the fly species; they constituted a constant source of annoyance to our soldiers. One can scarcely imagine a more troublesome infliction. Swarms of these disgusting in-

sects infested every tent, whilst they entirely monopolized the cookshops. Frequently were we compelled to send away our dinners untasted, on account of the rapacity of our annoyers, who with great effrontery had previously contrived to make their repast off the good things intended for our table, thus rendering the meat inedible. To a hungry man this loss proved an insufferable nuisance. Our sepoys adopted a wiser plan in order to baffle these provoking insects. Instead of cooking in the heat of the day, they quietly performed all their culinary operations in the middle of the night. Unfortunately, Englishmen will be Englishmen all the world over; and unless they can obtain their "grub" at reasonable intervals, a certain amount of angry bile is the usual result. Not possessing the patient disposition of natives, the hour of midnight appeared a most unsanctified and truly heathenish time for dining, so we did not deem it advisable to alter the hour of our repast, but despatched our meals in rather a primitive and hasty fashion; two or three natives furiously waving a punkah to and fro, even then scarcely able to drive away the flies from our dishes. I am not guilty of any exaggeration when I affirm that the whole carcase of a sheep would be instantly rendered unfit for eating, if exposed even for a couple of minutes. The river Kurroom, a mountain stream, flows betwixt Lukkee and the

fort, its breadth is about half a mile, which is a considerable width, considering the nearness of its head to the hills. Owing to the sandy nature of its level bed, the stream glides noiselessly through the valley, scarcely a ripple disturbing the smooth surface. The water is excessively brackish, and not at all agreeable to the palate; in fact, the natives themselves considered it unwholesome to imbibe too much of the waters of the Kurroom. Our doctor coincided with them in this respect, and attributed the numerous cases of "stone" that were very prevalent amongst the inhabitants, to the insalubrious nature of the waters of the Kurroom. Unfortunately, no wells or tanks were within reach of the people, consequently they had no other means wherewithal to quench their thirst. The Kurroom for three days, more or less, is almost dry, and as rain falls or the snow melts on the hills, so the bed of the river is gradually replenished, until the rising of the waters cuts off all communication with the opposite bank. Fish are not met with in this river, unless sought for near its mouth, and then are not worth the trouble of cooking. Some parts of the Kurroom are very attractive; the scenery being wild, and then again flowing through patches of well-cultivated ground. A boat or two with its dingy bit of canvass would decidedly have increased the beauties of the Kurroom, but in those days boats

never swam over the bosom of its stream. The weather could not exactly be considered as adapted for sporting amusements, yet still it did not hinder us, eager Nimrods, from indulging in the chase. We almost daily enjoyed a sharp run after an antelope, jackal or fox. The former animals congregated in herds, and might continually be discovered grazing over a large pasturage within five miles of Lukkee. The doctor on one occasion, by a singular fluke, captured a fine buck, by knocking him over with small shot. He was beating up the haunts of partridges, and oobara, when the antelope rushed close in front of him. Following up the honest old adage, "there's nothing like trying," the doctor presented his piece, when much to his astonishment, the animal fell to the ground, and on inspecting the deer, it appeared that the two front legs were shattered to pieces. Such luck as the above seldom rewarded our hard-day's chase. Well can I recollect how madly we pursued our four-footed foe, literally flying through the air when engaged in this infatuating sport. Strange to say, no very serious accident ever occurred, though in the course of our mad career, over hidden and rough ground, occasionally our pistols "*would* go off" on their own account, or perhaps an over zealous horseman would kiss the earth, rather a dusty one certainly, and not always particularly soft. We always

obtained capital sport amongst the small game, such as partridges, snipe, and wild fowl. As for the latter, we knocked them over to any amount.

The Bunnoo soldiers were perpetually begging for small shot and English powder, and really they showed no conscience in their unreasonable and frequent requests. The reader may pardon my offering a hint en passant, to those who purpose travelling in the East, to the effect that, in the selection of presents for bestowing upon their native friends, they should not forget fire-arms, gunpowder, and shot. I principally allude to the hill people. Our evening recreations were as various as they were novel; tilting at a tent peg securely driven into the ground, afforded vast amusement to the spectators, though it was not always equally satisfactory to the tilters. The successful performance of this eastern game, is not so facile as those imagine, who never tried the experiment. In fact, it requires considerable skill to pierce the centre of the peg, and raise it out of the ground, the steed galloping as fast as whip and spur can make him.

Nasty tumbles and accidents occur from spears splintering, or an awkward tilter striking the ground incautiously. Kassim Khan experienced a severe accident, which nearly deprived him of his eyesight. This young fellow was renowned for his skill at tilting, and on the

present occasion his unerring hand did not fail him, for his spear pierced the very centre of the mark. But a facetious spectator (I saw the scamp myself), previous to the tilter's arrival, bestowed a few extra blows upon the head of the peg, and the Bamboo spear was broken into a hundred splinters, one of which pierced the flesh immediately under the eye. Happily, with the exception of a little pain and fever, which medical skill quickly sent to the right about, our favourite was not otherwise damaged.

Ludicrous exhibitions, at the commencement of our tuition, occurred in the tilt yard, but, expert though many of the horsemen proved at this game, we eventually became no contemptible antagonists. We, in our turn, endeavoured to introduce an English game, by erecting mud walls from three to four feet high, over which we jumped our horses. The sowars could not, or were afraid to follow our example, in fact, it was a style of sport entirely foreign to their ideas, and when the scheme was first proposed, our people firmly believed that our senses had suddenly departed from us. Their best and pluckiest jocky, was unable to raise his horse over even three feet. I dont intend insinuating anything against their courage, for on several occasions ocular demonstrations convinced me, that braver men seldom drew sabres. The cause of impediment was

attributable to the absurd practice prevalent amongst Eastern horsemen, of attaching strong martingales to all their horses' head gear, thereby effectually checking leaping propensities, or preventing galloping with any degree of safety. The attempts displayed by some were very laughable, one Patan, in particular, amused us vastly. He was mounted upon a skinny, lilliputian pony, which he vainly endeavoured to lift over a diminutive bit of mud, certainly not exceeding two feet in height. After repeated rushes at the *hurdle*, the nag's patience became exhausted, and he commenced rearing, until, by dint of super animal exertions, he contrived to throw his two fore feet over the wall, but no efforts could persuade the two hinder ones to follow their example, the stomach in the mean time just grazing the top of the wall. The rider's perplexity and confusion baffles all description, whilst his rage became almost ungovernable, when he heard the roars of laughter proceeding from the numerous spectators, who of course enjoyed the ludicrous exhibition amazingly. Our disconsolate steeple chase rider, when released from his precarious position, made a hasty retreat, nor did he ever venture again to leap over a wall, at least, not to my knowledge.

By the month of February 1849, the valley of Bunnoo subsided into a perfect state of tranquillity; such a

happy circumstance had never previously been witnessed or heard of, by even the "oldest inhabitant" of this hitherto distracted country. The doctor and I took advantage of this sudden lull, and resolved to undertake a scientific, as well as sporting tour. We proposed visiting Dera Ishmael Khan, via the Peyzoo Pass, then crossing the Indus, to proceed along its banks, and so back to Lukkee, by way of Esakhyle.

Commissariat arrangements completed, the expedition made a start, but the stubborn domestics not entering into the spirit of the enterprize with the zeal of their masters, threw a variety of obstacles in the way, owing to which our tents were not pitched till near midnight. Whether guilty or otherwise, no native is ever without some excuse at his tongue's tip. So it happened in our case, the servants, when remonstrated with regarding their wilful neglect of duty, commenced threading a brilliant string of excuses, mingled considerably with lies. From their accounts the road was lost, and the camels had refused to carry their burthen. This statement failed to convince the doctor, who very properly inflicted corporal punishment upon the principal offender, and this summary chastisement had the desired effect, for, in future, our tents were always prepared for our reception, by the time we arrived after the morning's march. Owing to the above-mentioned occur-

rence, we were obliged to halt all day; however, our detention occasioned slight regret, for perceiving our close vicinity to the foot of the hills, directly after breakfast, mounting our steeds, we cantered towards the frowning range, followed by half a dozen well armed sowars, whose attendance we required in case of being attacked by any hill robbers. Our visit was a very agreeable one, the hill people offered a most hospitable reception, though rather astonished at our appearance. The doctor and an orderly ascended the hill, but the heat and fatigue prevented me from accompanying him, for my constitution had received a great shock during my late illness.

In Cole's absence I found ample amusement by remaining in a village, surrounded by a host of inquisitive damsels, who, like all their sex, maintained an incessant and noisy confabulation. As to their personal attractions, they far surpassed their Hindostani sisters, possessing fairer complexions and better proportioned figures. They willingly produced milk and fruit, unaccompanied by the usual request of "Buksheesh," in fact they refused my proffered gift. My curiously shaped sola hat appeared to amuse the ladies vastly; one fair damsel possessing, it may be supposed, a more than ordinary share of feminine curiosity, would insist on being permitted to inspect, minutely, the strange head-dress.

She almost turned it inside out, and from the manner in which she looked into it, one would have imagined she was searching for the maker's name. One of the sowars became highly indignant at witnessing this familiarity, which, however, formed a source of amusement to me. The men were busily engaged in their fields, but the intelligence of two Feringhees' arrival in the neighbourhood, induced them to suspend all their agricultural labours, in order to obtain a view of the white faces. Such an event was too rare to be neglected, for already rumour proclaimed that the Kalsa reign had for ever disappeared from the Punjab, and the white-faced warriors had taken the country.

Rapidly spread the news of our visit, and in a short time a motley group of wild-looking characters gathered round, to hear what news our sowars might feel inclined to communicate. We left our friends late in the afternoon, carrying with us a very favourable opinion of them; they were more refined, and infinitely more courteous than the generality of Bengal natives. But they were a far superior and different race of men, and no doubt, as their European intercourse increases, they will rapidly ascend the ladder of civilization. Their respectable demeanour convinces me that much may be accomplished with regard to these people. They possess no rambling propensities, and become much attached to the place of

their birth. People residing in such uncivilized parts are necessarily over superstitious, placing implicit reliance upon the faith of their priests, who, by the bye, are almost as ignorant as themselves. Bigamy seldom disgraces their villages, and as a proof of their superior feeling with respect to females, I mention, *en passant*, that laborious work principally devolves upon the men, whilst domestic affairs, such as drawing water, milking cows, and grinding corn, are performed by the women.

With the exception of one or two Hindoo shopkeepers, all the hill people about Bunnoo profess the Mahommedan faith, but still a few attribute supernatural power to a variety of invisible objects. Every prominent peak, or rock, has some religious anecdote connected with it. The scenery, on looking down into the deep ravines, is beautifully wild, huge rocks appear piled in admirable confusion one upon the other, until finally tapering to a point, they gracefully tower towards the firmament.

Naptha no doubt exists in great quantities amongst the Bunnoo hills, for, as we approached, the air was strongly impregnated with its dreadful odour; the natives themselves, however, were not aware of its valuable properties. After a refreshing night's rest, we started early in the morning for the Peyzoo Pass, which is about three miles long. The road was passable, and in this respect we were agreeably disappointed, for we were led to expect

that the pass would delay us on the road for some time. Lieutenant Pearse brought his guns by this route when he joined Taylor, and he complained sadly of the difficulties he encountered in traversing this portion of his march. However, his troubles arose from a heavy fall of rain, that unexpectedly came down only a day previous to his arrival at the entrance of the pass. This, naturally enough, considerably impeded his advance, for a perfect waterfall rushed furiously through the narrow passage, cutting away and destroying the road dreadfully. We only encountered one individual during our trip through this suspicious spot, and he proved to be our postman. The man seemed to be rather alarmed at first, and well he might be, considering the formidable appearance of our cavalcade, which consisted of upwards of fifty armed sowars. Besides, the locality was not renowned for its respectability, but, like all other Affghan passes, was supposed to be haunted by numerous lawless spirits.

We only detained the *Post* for ten minutes, and again pushed on, anxious to regain the open country. What would the English merchants have said concerning this short detention of the letter bag? Water is very scarce all over Bunnoo, and we only procured this refreshing element once during this day's journey, and that was at the southern entrance of the pass. But although we were cruelly thirsty, the taste was so brackish and

unpalatable that we merely moistened our lips, and watched with envy our sowars imbibing the stinking fluid with as much relish as though it had been delicious sherbet. Leaving our men and cattle to refresh themselves, Cole and myself, Englishmen like, handed down our names to posterity, by carving them in gigantic characters upon the face of a conspicuous rock. Should any traveller, hereafter visiting this pass, discover our marks, it is to be hoped that he may not be led astray; for perceiving the word Hugo graven in the rock, it might be mistaken for the superscription of the Græco Bactrians, whilst that of the doctor's might induce some speculating individual to indite a long treatise, consisting of some dozen reams of foolscap, stating his firm conviction that coal mines existed in the Bunnoo hills; though, by the way, for ought I know to the contrary, such may actually be the case. About 150 yards from the southern entrance is a small fort, capable of containing some 200 soldiers. It had only been lately repaired, and a few men formed the garrison; but we were afterwards obliged to increase the number, in order to protect travellers, who with reason dreaded the robbers, who a short time previously infested the neighbouring hills, few escaping their rapacity. We remained an hour in the fort, and having partaken of a hasty meal, continued the march.

As we inspected the interior arrangements of this rude fortress, a never-to-be-forgotten scene occurred. The Doctor possessed a good-tempered little spaniel, named "Blackey," who, prying about the little nooks, at last invaded the domains of a large hill dog, which, incensed at the intruder's audacity, forthwith attacked our little favourite. The master rushed to the rescue with a huge drawn cavalry sword in his hand. Away the trio bolted through and round the fort, the immense top boots of the biped pursuer being conspicuous above all, until the chase was effectually terminated by the large hill dog receiving a smart cut over the head.

Our march that day proved excessively fatiguing; our transit across the desert might be likened to walking over a baker's oven. I never, previously or since, experienced such a disagreeable sensation from the effects of the sun. In vain were horsemen repeatedly dispatched in every direction to discover water; alas! none was procurable, nor did we pass a shrub even of sufficient growth to shelter a dog from the scorching rays of the sun, that appeared literally to emit streaks of fire from its fierce body. We occasionally encountered a kaffila of Affghan merchants proceeding towards Lahore and the lower provinces. Fancy could not picture a more uncouth set of human beings; from their appearance and manners, they bore a greater resemblance

to thieves than peaceful traders. Ever and anon they threw suspicious glances at our passing cavalcade, watching us until we rode clear of their party.

The heat from April to September must be intolerable in this country; for when we marched through it in the month of January the air almost suffocated one. Our eyesight suffered excessively from the glare, as well as from the small particles of sand which the hot wind kept perpetually in motion. The numerous optical delusions were really wonderful; on several occasions, when oppressed with thirst, we were deluded into the idea that a short distance ahead we perceived lakes or rivers. Trees, cattle, and men were reflected on the surface, assuming such a natural appearance, that even many of the oldest soldiers, who had previously journeyed over the same ground, were often deceived by these tantalizing mirages. Those fortunate individuals who have never experienced the agony of going without water for hours together, can form no adequate idea of the sufferings of travellers placed in such a position. Hunger may for a short time be appeased by chewing a stick, but when no water is procurable, the intense thirst that afflicts the unhappy sufferer is awful. After marching nearly twenty-five miles I was fairly knocked up, giddiness came on, and I expected momentarily to fall out of the saddle. Fortunately we arrived at an

oasis which afforded us an abundant supply of water. Immediately the refreshing element was discovered, a general rush was made by the whole troop, who regardless of all order, commenced a regular scramble, until the water literally became choked with mud and brass utensils.

A hut induced us to make a temporary halt, and we were most hospitably received by the wild occupant of the desert, who really played the part of host to perfection. The poor fellow offered us milk and a few coarse cakes, but owing to the effects of the sun, &c., I could not retain the former on my stomach; but after this little performance I felt greatly relieved, and our march was resumed. At about four in the afternoon we arrived at a large village, and underneath a large neem-tree our white tents had been erected. Nearly all the inhabitants, consisting of about 2,500 flocked to welcome us, bringing with them goats, milk, rice, and eggs, by way of presents. Towards sunset endless petitions were handed to us; some complained of having their cattle stolen from them, others murmured against an unfair tax that had been imposed upon their land. But all joined in raising a general outcry against a neighbouring Kardar. The case required immediate investigation, and I was sorry that I had no judicial authority that would allow me a pretext for inter-

ference in the matter, for on listening to their complaint, it was evident that gross injustice had been done to the poor villagers. It appeared from their statement, that the Kardar who had charge of the district was unable to collect the taxes due to Government by some of his villages, consequently, he adopted the following expedient. Most of the villages under his charge were entirely dependant upon a single canal for a regular supply of water; from no other source could this necessary of life be obtained. It so happened that the mouth of this canal was situated not far from the said Kardar's dwelling-house, and the sage ruler, upon receiving intelligence of the villagers' reluctance to remit the taxes, forthwith issued an order to dam up the canal's entrance, thus cutting off all further supply of water.

There were one or two points in this case that made me take compassion upon the poor people, and their complaint was referred to Taylor, who doubtless redressed their grievances. They had already been some days without fresh water for drinking purposes, and they required a large supply for irrigating the soil, consequently every day increased their troubles; still the Kardar would not relent, and the villagers acted with a similar obstinacy. The latter informed us that this deplorable state of affairs had already existed eight

days, and that unless some vigorous measures were adopted, nearly all the present inhabitants would be compelled to quit their native hearths, and retire to a more favourable locality. The reader, no doubt, is surprised to hear that such unlawful means for collecting revenue should be tolerated, but queer scenes, under the denomination of justice, are enacted in the East.

In a day or two Dera Ishmael came in view. The town was entirely concealed amongst the numerous mango and date trees. Several men of rank and wealth rode out to meet us, their approach being a signal for a little fuss and by play amongst the horses and their riders. The principal gentlemen dismounted on coming up, offering the usual gifts much to the pleasure of the avaricious orderlies, who were perfectly aware that all the money presented to us, would, ultimately, pass into their pockets. This Eastern custom proved very troublesome and expensive, for we were prohibited from accepting any pecuniary present from the natives, although obliged to return their civility. Now, to have refused their proferred coin, would have been regarded as a gross insult; consequently we apparently accepted the token of friendship, whereby our attendants reaped a very profitable harvest.

On our arrival at Dera, we took immediate possession of General Cortlandt's house, and congratulated our-

selves upon our good fortune in obtaining the use of a well built house, after having resided under canvass for so long a period. At first, we could scarcely realize the fact, that we were once more living in an English built dwelling, and thought it highly probable that our optics were still labouring under a delusion, similar to that which continually deceived us in crossing the desert. The neat and well laid out garden called forth our admiration. Pomegranate trees, covered with magnificent crimson blossoms, lined either side of the walks, while the delicate white jessamine flourished luxuriantly in every bed. The soil appeared to be particularly favourable for the cultivation of rose trees, a few beautiful specimens from Affghanistan attracted our attention, but the stupid gardener, when ordered to gather a bouquet, just pulled off the rose close up to the flower itself. The natives never *set up* flowers like the English people, but invariably form them into necklaces, by passing cotton through the centre of the flower. Apple trees appeared common enough, and we were told that five species were cultivated in the Derra Jhât. During our residence at Dera, we never once enjoyed an uninterrupted day of rest, and as for walking round the garden, it was an utter nuisance, for no sooner did we step forth from the threshold, than we were besieged by a perfect army of inquisitive individuals of both sexes,

who eagerly pushed themselves forward to catch a glimpse of our features, and as a matter of course viewed us in the light of conquerors. Whenever we appeared in public the mob hovered round us, and created a hubbub far from agreeable. No doubt their intentions were complimentary, but the dust raised by the sable multitude, together with the stench that always accompanies such an assemblage, proved anything but refreshing to our English olfactory nerves, and had our wishes been consulted, we certainly would have willingly dispensed with our friend's noisy demonstrations of welcome.

Dera Ishmael Khan may be considered the capital of the Dera Jhât. Its bazaar is far superior, in every respect, to the generality of those in other Punjab towns. But that which strikes principally the traveller's attention, is the regularity with which the houses are attached to each other, the cleanliness of the streets, and the contented air of the inhabitants. Nearly all articles of consumption, including many European commodities, are here procurable, and the Affghans carried on an extensive trade with the people of Dera, bringing their merchandize *vid* a pass, somewhere near the Tuckt-i-Suliman, literally the throne of Soliman, a large peak 18,000 feet high, and on a clear day, plainly visible from Cortlandt's house at Dera.

A Kaffila of Cabul merchants arrived in Dera at about

the same time as ourselves, consequently, curiosity prompted us to inspect their commodities. Their fruits would have proved too tempting for any epicure, and the delicious grapes fully equalled plums in size. The pomegranates were vastly superior to any we had previously met with, but they were at once thrown aside on the appearance of pears; this latter description of fruit was offered for sale in neat little boxes, and the Affghans told us that it always fetched a ready sale in the lower provinces, and no wonder, for they actually melted in one's mouth. The apples were not so highly valued, nor, in my estimation, did they possess any flavour. Their most remunerative articles consisted of bear and squirrel skins, furs, and musk, the latter, however, was very scarce. The squirrel skins are in great request, and a large profit is derived from their sale, seven or eight rupees being frequently demanded for a single skin. Some very fine chogas were offered for our inspection, but the exorbitant prices attached to them, debarred our purchasing any. This (the choga) is a favourite garment, much sought after by European and native residents of the Punjab. In shape, it bears some resemblance to a gentleman's dressing gown, being a most comfortable and graceful dress reaching down to the heel.

During the cold weather, the English officers convert

it into a lounging garment, for, though extremely light, it retains great heat. The price varies according to the quality of the material, and the amount of manual work, embroidery, &c., employed in the workmanship. Those constructed of camel's hair are considered the best, nor can they be purchased for less than fifty rupees, whereas the imitation ones can be procured for half that sum. If a very handsome one is required, perhaps a couple or three hundred rupees might purchase the same. The Posteen is a very comfortable kind of overcoat, a most valuable addition for those employed on any night duty; it reaches down to the knee, and buttons all up the centre, leaving the arms free. They are generally constructed of bear's or goats' skin, but a few, and the most valuable, are made with the skins of unborn kids, the poor mother being killed when far gone in pregnancy; this, naturally, increases the value of a Posteen, but so acute are the Affghans in fabricating impostures, that not a doubt exists as to many uninitiated people being imposed on. Unless well accustomed to deal in Posteens, one can scarcely detect which garment is made of kids', or which is made of sheep's skin. When I first saw a Posteen, I took it for a lady's dress, as it resembled, what the fair sex would designate, a Polka Jacket.

During the siege of Mooltan two or three Kaffilas

sojourned in the British camp, where, as might be expected, they received a hearty welcome, whilst the merchants reaped a rich harvest. The big wigs in camp, as usual, spoilt the trade for their poorer brother officers, by allowing the Affghans to charge any amount they pleased for their goods, without ever demurring as to the prices. One field officer gave three rupees for a box of grapes, the proper charge of which should have been four annas. No one, certainly, could blame the shrewd merchants, for taking advantage of such gross folly. They quickly discovered the weak points of their customers, and sold their commodities accordingly. These unscrupulous gentlemen were perfectly astonished at the mild demeanour of the hated Feringhees, whilst they could not help admiring their honesty in mercantile transactions, paying immediately for any article purchased. Such a safe retreat for their property and lives, induced some to continue for upwards of a month in the British camp. In fact after travelling through such a banditti country as Affghanistan, the British camp must have proved a perfect paradise. These merchants, from their own accounts undergo great risks and hardships during their route through the hills. A very intelligent Patan amused us by his opinion of the lawless characters inhabiting the Suliman mountains. The range opposite Dera Ishmael Khan is famous for its

freebooters, who continually commit depredations upon the people of the plains. These villages had formerly to protect themselves, hence the number of forts and fortified villages that are erected along the foot of the range. Many of these robber bands are sufficiently strong to withstand the power of their lawful sovereign; and all merchants, who have occasion to travel through their country, are compelled to purchase their safety by offering black mail to the bandit chief. Such a dangerous locality is, naturally enough, much dreaded by travellers, who never attempt the journey alone, but always wait until a large party has assembled; but even then they are obliged to shell out the coin, when they arrive at any narrow or intricate portion of a pass. The robbers being well acquainted with the nature of the ground, frequently assault the Kaffilas before the latter are even aware of their opponents' presence. These sudden and unexpected attacks paralyze the merchants, and they are easily overwhelmed, but if much resistance has been offered, the survivors are frequently put to death.

Strange to say these wild hill robbers have some regard for the truth, that is to say, under certain circumstances; and when once their word is pledged, implicit confidence may be reposed in their good faith. However, the possession of this truly noble quality, does not

hinder them from pilfering the smallest article that attracts their notice. The hill tribes, round Peshawur, are wonderfully expert at cattle lifting. Lately several horses have actually been carried off in broad daylight, and that too within the precincts of cantonments. The people in the vicinity of Bunnoo, not contented with small adventures, generally attacked a village, carrying off every article of value, including, on some occasions, the poor unoffending women. The Beelooches, on the other hand, robbed itinerant Hindoo merchants, and at the same time showed a decided taste for camel stealing. These last mentioned robbers, however, have been nearly decimated by the gallant Scinde horse, who are perpetually engaged with these fierce freebooters. The women attached to the tribe, often accompany their husbands during these thieving expeditions and fight with great desperation, if hard pressed by a superior party. The inhabitants of the Suliman mountains have been likened to the Scotch clans of old, and this simile is probably a very just one.

CHAPTER XI.

Visit the Dera Nawab—Fort of Dera—Sporting Recollections—The Seikhs and Cultivators of the Soil—Affghan Camels—Tigers—Kaffir Kote—Alexander the Great—Colonel Sykes.

After receiving the visits of various native noblemen, and allowing the bustle attending their reception to subside, we commenced instituting enquiries relative to the sport procurable in the adjacent jungles. The results were very satisfactory, and, in consequence, our expectations were raised to the utmost, for some experienced shikarees, or native huntsmen, informed us that tigers, pigs, and deer of several kinds, frequented the opposite banks of the Indus in numbers. One individual declared he had often seen a tiger busily discussing the merits of a cow; and, on another occasion, he remembered witnessing the death of a letter carrier, or rather postman, who was running along the road leading to a ghat. We were about starting, when intelligence reached us that M—— had suddenly been taken very ill, and was proceeding towards our direction, in order to derive some

benefit from change of air, and at the same time to obtain medical advice. Under these unfortunate circumstances, of course, we countermanded our previous directions, resolving to remain at Dera until M——'s arrival. In the mean time being unwilling to quit the district, without paying the Dera Nawab a visit, we dispatched a messenger to his highness, intimating our proposed visit on the following morning, if convenient. A very polite answer was returned us, and next morning, accompanied by a highly respectable suite, C—— and I waited upon the regal dignity. Our attendants, ever desirous of getting up a parade, or as they'd style it, a "tomasha," conducted us by the longest route, namely, through the very centre of the town. We had all along endeavoured to avoid this annoyance, but our conceited people determined upon carrying out their own arrangements, so we had no alternative but to allow the sowars to conduct us by whatever path they considered best.

Luckily all things mundane have an end, and after having gratified the towns people to their heart's content, we arrived opposite the palace where already a vast multitude had assembled to witness our reception. The Nawab happened to be an invalid, but we never ascertained for certain what kind of complaint he was labouring under. His principal object appeared to be to keep the atmosphere as cool as possible, and

we were afterwards informed that the Prince felt great relief when seated in a tub of cold water, an operation he was incessantly undergoing; however, in honour of his guests, he exerted himself more than usual by sitting up during our presence, but though it was the cold season, he could not remain five seconds without having a huge punkah wheel revolving in front of him.

He appeared a stupid, phlegmatic sort of customer, but he was not without his good points. It was amusing to listen to the high encomiums which he lavished upon Edwardes's courage and skill in the late outbreak; whilst, as a matter of course, we ourselves were not permitted to depart without receiving a tolerable amount of flattery. He anxiously requested to have full particulars detailed to him, relative to the Mooltan siege; and evinced great curiosity regarding the probable punishment Moolraj would be condemned to suffer for his conduct. At nearly all the native courts conversation is carried on in Persian, but it unfortunately so happened that neither the doctor nor myself was acquainted with that language; therefore we encountered no slight difficulty in comprehending what his Highness wished to communicate to us. There we sat perched upon lofty stools without backs, grinning away like mad, until the doctor in sheer despair, roared out, "Razee Nawab,

eh, eh, Razee Sahib, koooch shikar, hi." Whether his highness understood him or not, it's impossible to say, but the only answer he returned was a gentle bow and a broad grin. The conversation, as the reader must have already perceived, was by no means a very brisk one, and really it eventually became fatiguing. For want of something better to talk about, I informed the Nawab that though we were unable to speak Persian, we could nevertheless perfectly well understand a person speaking in that language. This slight deviation from the truth was attended by a suitable punishment, for immediately the old gentleman commenced with great volubility to favour us with a string of most unpronounceable words, such as to perfectly bewilder his English listeners, who sat immoveable, with mouth and eyes wide open, staring with amazement at the royal speaker. At length the interview assumed such a ridiculous aspect, that we could no longer restrain our merriment. At every sentence uttered by the Nawab, we nodded and laughed away like skilfully constructed automaton figures, which deluded the host into the belief that the whole of his conversation was comprehended by his visitors. C—— amused himself by taking a general survey of the room and its occupants, but he appeared rather disappointed with the palace. What a rum old chap it is, muttered the doctor. This place resembles rather a dog kennel

than a regal dwelling. Then ashamed of our taciturn behaviour, he endeavoured again to address the Nawab. "Shikar hi, Nawab sahib, hang it J——, why don't you say something." I don't know what to say was my reply. Affairs being in such a state, and considering that the conversation was only being carried on by ourselves, whilst we had allowed the Nawab to slink into the back ground, we deemed it expedient to bring our irksome visit to a conclusion; so after embracing the Prince we took our departure. No sooner had we retired to a respectable distance, than both of us indulged in a boisterous fit of laughter, though we could not refrain from compassionating the "man who could not get cold." I sadly fear that our conduct was not over and above creditable; but if the Nawab did form an unfavourable opinion of the Feringhees, it did not prevent him from forwarding to our house, a splendid native dinner, served up on a large tray that required four able bodied men to raise it from the ground. The sweetmeats, cakes, &c. were too greasy, and therefore failed to tempt our appetites. It is a great pity that native cooks will saturate their dishes with an immoderate quantity of ghee, for in other respects the culinary productions are passable enough. On our return home, we inspected the fort which lies to the north of the city. Its guns commanded the whole of the town, but the for-

tifications were very inferior; however, it made an admirable prison,—a building apparently much needed; for when we visited the fort there were upwards of two hundred convicts confined within for misdemeanours. Little attention was paid to the comfort of the poor culprits, who, on our approach loudly petitioned us to release them from their miserable condition, many complaining that they had been unjustly condemned, without ever having been allowed an opportunity of justifying themselves. We were detained at Dera longer than we anticipated, being unwilling to leave M——, until he had somewhat recovered from his severe indisposition. However, able treatment soon reinstated our gallant volunteer in his usual state of salubrity, and doubtless he is by this time perfectly able and willing to have another single combat with any body who may feel inclined to enjoy a few minutes recreation of the kind. Previous to his arrival at Dera, we had some capital runs after wild boar and deer. The ground was hard, and very dangerous to ride over, on account of the holes and decayed roots of trees. One day in hotly pursuing a deer, my horse fell, and I contrived to break my wrist, the steed receiving severe injury at the same time. In fact I made sure at first that he was killed, for the animal remained senseless for a couple of minutes. As luck would have it, a doctor was on the spot when the accident occurred, but nei-

ther medicine nor leeches were procurable, so no alternative offered but to grin and bear the pain. Of course, under these circumstances my recovery was tardy, and nearly a fortnight elapsed before I could again enjoy the chase; and even then my wrist was too weak to wield a spear with much success. Immediately the pain had somewhat subsided, we crossed the Indus, which by the bye is very broad and deep opposite Dera. Our transit occupied a long time, for there was only one small ferry boat; and each trip took full an hour and a half, owing to the rapidity of the river, which carried the boat several hundred yards below the landing place. The jungle on the left bank of the Indus consists of long Indian grass, Jhow, and in some places large babool trees, containing an abundance of every species of game. We certainly enjoyed capital sport for a period of twenty days; never before nor since have I experienced such a delightful hunting trip. We frequently succeeded in capturing six or seven deer, besides a boar or two; and may be on our return to camp, would occasionally knock over a partridge or hare. Field sports have always had a charm for me, and in my opinion it is the most healthful and agreeable amusement one can enjoy in India. In the east we have a variety of ways of chasing or shooting wild animals. The nature of the ground has to be considered, as well as the habits

of the game. Many young officers complain of the paucity of Indian wild animals, but the truth is they are perfectly ignorant of the way in which they should go to work. The jungles contain numbers of wild animals, affording admirable sport for those who take any trouble. Our Sowars were passionately fond of the chase; their weapons being swords or spears, whilst some preferred their matchlocks. We always brought with us a large pack of dogs including the Rampore breed, Persian greyhounds, and a large species resembling a wolf hound. Hyænas now and then broke cover, but it was very difficult to run them down, their cunning is equal to that of a fox; for though I employed an endless variety of stratagems, all my efforts to capture them proved abortive. The Punjab bears are very large and formidable; they are numerous in the Suliman mountains. The tigers a few years ago committed great havoc amongst the tame cattle, and even carried away the villagers employed in clearing jungle ground.

The Seikhs perpetually raised large expeditions in order to enjoy their favourite amusement, displaying great courage in the attack. Having discovered the retreat of the tiger, by tracing his pug marks, the whole party encircled their foe, and by dint of yells and hurling fireworks in the jungle succeeded in dislodging him. The tiger discovering the place to be too warm,

charges furiously through the ignited grass; when a general discharge from his assailants, if well directed, brings him to the ground. A large sanguinary tiger frequented the landing place opposite Dera some eight years ago; and owing to his ferocity few travellers dared venture in the vicinity of the wild brute's abode. The poor postman, however, was obliged daily to pass through a very dangerous portion of the jungle; and one day in performing the journey he was carried off by the tiger. After this accident, a guard of soldiers was actually posted at the ghat for protecting travellers, but whether they ever killed the tiger or not I can't say. The Punjab people often catch these animals in traps; perhaps making them over to some religious faqueer who easily tames them; and if kindly treated, (receiving plenty of food, &c.,) the caged tiger soon becomes familiar with its keeper. But after all their temper can never be depended upon; instances have occurred in which, without receiving any provocation whatever, the treacherous pet has suddenly rushed unawares upon his master, who is killed before assistance can arrive. Once or twice I have ridden through a jungle tenanted by a tiger. On one occasion we had not been so fortunate as usual, and were about returning to our tents, when a very tempting looking jungle appeared in the distance. Hurrying on, not doubting but that at last a hog or a

deer would reward our perseverance, we stationed ourselves, spear in rest, outside the tall grass, ordering all the sowars and foot soldiers to go round to the opposite side, form line, and then commence driving before them such denizens of the jungles as might be hiding themselves. With most exemplary patience we remained quietly seated in our saddles, for what appeared to us an awful long period; until we perceived the head-dress of a few horsemen peeping over the grass. At first we were disgusted, calculating upon again being disappointed; but scarcely had we turned our horses' heads, than with a low sulky growl a noble tiger, bounding as gracefully as a ballet dancer, passed between Cole and myself. So near did he approach us, that had we felt disposed, we might easily have struck him with our spears. This, however, would have been a foolish act; for the slight wound would only have irritated the tiger, and in all probability we should have suffered dearly for our temerity. One of the foot soldiers possessing more courage than discretion, foolishly drew his tulwar and dealt the tiger a sharp cut across the head as he rushed past. The animal did not hesitate resenting such treatment, and with marvellous celerity inflicted upon his intrepid biped antagonist such severe chastisement, that made me tremble for the poor fellow's safety. On examining his person we found he was wounded on the

arm and shoulder. The bite of a tiger though not always fatal, is considered very dangerous; but in the present instance the man recovered. Three individuals asserted their claims to this cure. In the first place, without our knowledge, a native quack applied cow dung to the wounds, thereby irritating the flesh, causing it to swell up to an enormous size, until the muscle parts of the arm was as large as the patient's leg. My salve consisted of a material that invariably agrees with the native constitution, and no doubt my rupee plaster had a considerable share in the man's recovery. C—— then took the sufferer under his care, and finally by our united exertions, we managed to bring the wounded man round again. It really is wonderful to witness the pertinacity of the natives of India, who persist in seeking medical advice from their own ignorant doctors; when both superior skill and unadulterated physic can always be procured gratis at almost every station in the Company's territory. Even our sepoys, unless seriously indisposed, betray a decided objection to entering their respective regimental hospitals. Prejudice prevails over the dictates of common sense, and immediately indisposition affects them away they go in search of some religious quack; who after receiving a tolerably long purse, generally contrives to increase instead of eradicating the disease, which doubtless would have disap-

peared in a few days, had the invalid taken the proper precautions of applying to his hospital for rational medical treatment. But no, they prefer shilly shallying with a quack, until the increased danger of their complaint frightens them, and not till then will they salaam to the European hukeem. In cases of cholera, however, the sepoys willingly apply to be placed on the sick list.

The reader, it is to be trusted, will excuse this digression, and we will once more continue on our sporting tour. At the various halting places which were generally in the vicinity of a village, we experienced much attention and kindness from the inhabitants; who always evinced great alacrity in rendering us what little comforts they thought would be agreeable. We endeavoured to cultivate this good feeling, by being very particular in all pecuniary transactions, never receiving any article without giving its possessor the adequate value for the same. We also insisted upon our followers adopting a similar line of conduct. These satisfactory measures produced the desired effect, for the people perceiving that they had no cause to fear our visits; but that, on the contrary, our arrival gave a stimulous to trade, at last viewed us in the light of very desirable guests.

The villagers informed us that the tigers and pigs were a perpetual cause of annoyance to them; the latter

being so numerous and destructive, that the sugar crops suffered annually to an enormous extent. But, formerly, during the Seikh raj or rule, their agricultural as well as domestic property, attracted the attention of the avaricious soldiers, whenever a Kalsa regiment marched through the district.

The knowledge that the sepoys would commit these depredations, unless some means were employed to satisfy their demands, induced the Jemadar, or head man of the village, to offer a pecuniary gift, so as to prevent the soldiers from oppressing his people. But, elsewhere, I received from undoubted authority, the fact that, during Runjeet Sing's reign, even a Kardar has deemed it advisable to purchase the friendship of a native colonel, who, perhaps in charge of a couple of regiments, was marching through the Kardar's country. This man was perfectly aware that, according to the amount of oppression inflicted on the several villages under his charge, so would the people complain about the taxes, and the Kardar's pockets might suffer to no inconsiderable amount. To avert these misfortunes became the principal object of the Kardar, who strove his utmost to induce the commander of the troops to change his present route for that of another, passing through a district governed by some other individual.

During our journey along the banks of the Indus we

came across several pretty little spots; one place in particular, forcibly reminded me of an English gentleman's neglected park. Bears, so we were informed, often visited this pleasant locality; and a wood-cutter assured us that he had seen them quietly reposing under the wide spreading foliage of the fine trees we were then ourselves riding under. We remained in this natural park to escape the midway sun, and I enjoyed a delicious siesta; not a living soul, saving ourselves, being seen in any direction. The noble trees, scattered here and there, scarcely permitted a particle of sunshine to make its way through their friendly arms; apparently jealous of the verdant grass that decked their roots.

On our arrival in camp another, and much larger Kaffila of Affghans, remained in our vicinity for the night. They appeared to be such a sociable set of fellows, that I resolved to form their acquaintance, which proved a very easy matter; and I soon found myself constituting one of the family circle. Their camels struck me as being remarkably fine, being covered with longer and glossier hair than the generality of those I had previously met with. On expressing my opinion relative to the superiority of their camels, the Affghans stated that it was principally owing to the effects of climate, as well as to the kinder treatment the camels enjoyed, when the property of a good master. Properly

speaking, there are very few camels in India; those that are termed camels should be designated dromedaries; the latter having only one hump on its back, whilst the former have two.

The sandy nature of the Cabool soil is particularly adapted for the camel, which, in traversing the arid deserts, can find nourishment in its very scanty herbage, when other cattle droop and die for want of food or drink. Our new friends gave us some very edifying information, relative to these useful animals, but whether in narrating their intelligence, they strictly adhered to the truth, it is impossible to inform the reader. With respect to camels being enabled to remain without food for seven or eight days, I don't place any reliance upon such a statement. Practical experience has convinced me that this is an exaggerated supposition, for I have witnessed camels suffering greatly from exhaustion after a twelve hours march, carrying a burden, not weighing more than four hundred pounds weight.

Now, these Affghan merchants, if questioned upon the subject, will resolutely assert that their quadrupeds are capable of sustaining, not only 400 pounds, but 400 seers weight, which is just double the burden; then they assure you that the camels travel upwards of thirty miles daily, at the rate of about two miles and a half an hour, more or less, according to the nature of the

ground. When the day's journey is performed, the goods are taken off the animals' backs and packed up in a heap, round which, after the camels have returned from grazing, the whole of the beasts of burden are picqueted. About sunset, the camel drivers concoct a sort of sticky pudding, containing a quantity of stimulating ingredients, such as ginger, mussalah, and other hot spices. The camels are very partial to this paste, which the keeper conveys to their mouths bit by bit; so that the feeding process is rather a ridiculous one in the eyes of a stranger. The Affghan mules are very enduring creatures, and fetch a ready sale in the Punjab and upper provinces. One hundred rupees is the price of a good serviceable mule.

On halting just opposite Kaffir Kote, we naturally expressed a wish to explore these ancient Græco Bactrian remains; so forming a little pic nic, we crossed the river, and were soon scrambling over the ruins. Kaffir Kote, signifies in the language of the country infidels, fort or village; there are two of these deserted buildings situate within seven miles of each other. One and the largest appears originally to have been a fort, and judging from even its present formidable aspect, must, in former days, have been almost impregnable. The walls are thick, being composed of neatly proportioned stones, a foot and a half square, which are firmly cemented

together by very superior material. Some of this cement we collected for analysis, and so durable was the mortar, that it required the aid of a sharp chisel before we could carve it into any form or figure.

Within the precincts of the fort, one or two apparently dilapidated temples attracted our notice; anxious to ascertain what effect age had produced upon the woodwork, we slightly touched a beam whereupon it crumbled into dust. Our sowars told us that the ruins were famous for harbouring robbers, and they endeavoured to palm their superstitious nonsense upon us, particularly striving to inculcate in our unbelieving breasts the belief in ghosts and evil spirits. We minutely inspected the supposed temples, but our search failed to satisfy our curiosity; flowers were neatly carved on the cornices and ceiling, but we were not fortunate enough to discover any figures of men or cattle, nor in fact any hieroglyphics to enable us to ascertain the probable period in which the erection of the fort took place. The walls ascend abruptly from the river's edge, well supported by strong buttresses of immense thickness, placed at a distance of every thirty yards.

The range of hills upon which Kaffir Kote is built, is a spur running south of the Bunnoo mountains, consisting principally of limestone, with layers of white

chalk containing a quantity of flint. The view obtained from the peak, that towers above the fort, is very splendid; and, though owing to the non-existence of a road the ascent is laborious, still the lovely panorama that greets the climber on his arrival on the summit, amply compensates for the few scratches and the difficulty of breathing, that he must expect to undergo in ascending such a rugged precipice.

The opposite country appears to great advantage, the level nature of the land permitting an unobscured view extending several miles; the rich tracts of cultivation forming a pleasant contrast to the brown jungle that stretches along the banks of the river. Herds of buffaloes might be seen scattered over the jungle waste; and perhaps a solitary boat gliding over the waters, its crew making the air ring again with their loud appeals to "Allah." The mighty Indus flows proudly past the fortress; and so crystal-like are its waters, that the high perched gazer easily detects the shoals and rocks that lie slumbering underneath the surface. The whole constitutes a lovely picture, not easily realized by those who never have witnessed such scenes. Right about face, as soldiers would say, and in lieu of jungle cultivation and villages, the eye of the spectator falls upon the stern frown of the lofty mountains in the back ground. But it was really painful to behold the listless

apathy of our sowars, who appeared to gaze upon the charming prospect stretched beneath them with utter indifference. As for reflecting upon the probable origin of the ruins, such an idea never for a moment invaded their brain kingdom, and, like the generality of Eastern people, they considered antiquarian researches as so much labour utterly thrown away. As we with unabated zeal, for nearly three hours, kept tumbling about on all fours, now jamming half our bodies into some dark recess, then again breaking stones with an ardour exceeding that of a workhouse pauper, whilst we beat that of a convict all to smashes, our attendants, without any hesitation, came to the conclusion that we were both incurable madmen.

Various opinions have from time to time been promulgated by learned travellers, regarding the original architects of Kaffir Kote. From the natives it would be absurd to calculate upon receiving any assistance, their answer to all enquiries is merely that, according to their traditions, Kaffir Kote was founded by a race of infidels years ago. More than this cannot be extracted from them. Thus the task is rendered doubly difficult for the antiquarian.

There is a tribe still extant in the north of Affghanistan, which boasts of its affinity with white people, possibly in former days they might have held sway over

the Dera Jhat. One fact is certain, which is, that a vastly superior race of men than those at present inhabiting the neighbouring country, must have been the founders of Kaffir Kote; for the architectural and engineering talent exhibited, do not bear the slightest resemblance to the forts built by the present or preceding generation. The admirers of Alexander the Great assert that he erected the fort, but this is an argument open to considerable discussion. The reader, however, must form his own opinion on the subject. History informs us that Alexander's successes carried the science and art of the Greek into the remotest regions of the East; but whether it were introduced into the Dera Jhat is impossible to say. According to Plutarch, Alexander must have crossed the river Hydaspes, at nearly the identical ferry forded by the British during the last Seikh campaign. The ancient historian continues his interesting description of the Greek line of march, by stating that when the weeping Macedonians approached their general, and implored him to discontinue the further prosecution of the march, Alexander, discovering how futile his efforts were to persuade his soldiers to advance across the Ganges, resolved to visit the ocean as the only enterprize that presented itself to his ambitious views. Having constructed boats and rafts, the victorious army leisurely floated down the rivers. The reader will ob-

serve that Plutarch writes in the plural, (rivers,) and moreover intimates that the passage was not a hurried one. Having proceeded a short distance, they arrived in the country of the Malli, who it appears nearly annihilated the invaders. Succeeding ages and the introduction of foreign languages, may have corrupted the word Malli into Mooltan. No doubt a man of Alexander's enterprising disposition, would be anxious to explore all the Punjab rivers; and in order to carry out this project may have dispatched three or four divisions of his army down the various rivers; thus, although Alexander himself may not have navigated the northerly portion of the Indus, it is highly probable that some of his generals pursued that route. Alexander is supposed to have built a city, calling it after his favourite dog Peritas, which possibly has been converted into Rhotas, a large ruined fort about ten miles above the town of Jhelum. But many aver that an Eastern prince, who flourished in the 15th or 16th century, built Rhotas. Alexander himself evidently took the route of the river Chenab, for the Malli, or Mooltan country, is situated upon the Chenab. No doubt his men landed and committed depredations in the Malli country, hence the catastrophe alluded to by Plutarch.

However, to return to Kaffir Kote; we had been roaming about nearly all the morning, and were now

quietly reposing under a ruined temple, when we calmly commenced speculating upon its original possessors, the fragrant weed tending to assist us in our thoughts, when to our inexpressible delight our English letters arrived, the worthy postman having discovered our mountain retreat. Need I add that Alexander, Porus, Rhotas, and our old friend Plutarch, disappeared from our imagination "like a beautiful dream," all vanished instantaneously, and very likely we perused our epistles upon the very spot that the Macedonian conquerer selected for dictating his dispatches. One of my correspondents happened to be Colonel Sykes, who, greatly to my astonishment, wrote to inform me that he had presented me with a cadetship; such generosity is rare indeed, particularly when displayed towards so utter a stranger. Immediately on receipt of this unexpected intelligence, all my projects were annulled, and with pain I quitted the society of well-tried and sincere friends; moreover, I deeply regretted having to resign charge of the two regiments consigned to my temporary command. However, it was a matter of necessity to proceed towards Lahore with the least possible delay. My brother had just been appointed Assistant Commissioner of Mooltan, consequently I resolved visiting him *en route* to the Punjab capital.

CHAPTER XII.

Proceed down the Indus—Reach Mooltan—River Jhelum—Wuzeer-abad — Goojranwallah — Lahore—Umritsa—Sahurunpore —Allahbad—Benares—Snake Charmers—Scorpions.

An admirable boat of about twenty-five tons burden, was procured for conveying me and my chattels as far as Dera Ghazee Khan. On my arrival at Esakhyle although only two day's notice had been given to the Kardar of that village, every arrangement had been completed, and that too in a style of elegance and comfort that caused no little surprise. The hire of the boat was very moderate, only amounting to twenty rupees. The rapidity of the current soon conveyed me to a village, nearly opposite Dera Ghazee Khan, from thence four days marching across the Doâb brought us to Mooltan. The road itself was in tolerable order, and though the heat was great and the water unpalatable, still the country presented a more lively appearance than that we marched through *en route* to Bunnoo. Another serious dispute, originating in the customary overbearing conduct of the guard, nearly terminated in

a fight; had such a catastrophe taken place, the chances would have been decidedly against our party. The officious orderlies endeavoured, forcibly, to obtain milk and other articles of consumption, without offering the poor villagers any equivalent for the same. This unsatisfactory mode of transacting business, naturally enough raised the indignation of the people, who were resolved upon resenting such unjust treatment, and recourse was had to arms. The orderlies beat a retreat to camp, bringing with them one of the villagers, who, of course, was immediately released and presented with a rupee or two, which the reader may rest assured came from the sepoys' pockets. I was excessively annoyed when made acquainted with the cause of this disturbance, for my servants had been repeatedly cautioned against committing such rascally proceedings. A crowd of excited men rapidly collected round my camp, loudly demanding justice, nor did the alarm and uproar subside until I had punished my people.

On arriving at Mooltan a striking change was perceptible, the trenches were all filled up, and the two breaches restored to their natural condition. People now might be perceived carelessly inspecting the fort, and perambulating about, where a few weeks back, certain death would have resulted had any one had the temerity to venture so near the vicinity of the sharp

shooters of Moolraj. Most of the inhabitants had returned to their respective houses, though they were perpetually being dunned by the prize agents, who, with all their exertions, were not successful in their endeavours to extort money from the richer merchants. The wily Hindoos quickly discovered that no matter what *threats* were held out against them, in the event of their not producing the stipulated sum, still these *threats* were never carried into execution. I believe, to this day, the prize agents have never realized the amount of rupees that the citizens, after the capitulation of the city, promised faithfully to liquidate, provided the soldiers were prevented from plundering the town. Now the British strictly adhered to these terms, but far different was it with the Mooltan people, who day after day offered endless obstacles and excuses, until, finally, the prize agents considered it useless to dunn them any more. As previously remarked, most of the large houses in and about Mooltan were built over capacious vaulted chambers, which were converted into a variety of uses; some people preferred living in these cool apartments altogether, during the hot weather, whilst those of a suspicious disposition, hid their treasures and valuable goods in the dark crevices, or even in the wells that were generally excavated in the ground floor. Occasionally property thus concealed was discovered and taken

away by people in the employment of the prize agents. A favourite mode of secreting money was to extract three or four bricks from the inside of a well, and in the cavity thus formed the gold would be inserted, after which the bricks were replaced, and in order to prevent all suspicion, fresh plaster sprinkled over with mud and dirt, so as to resemble the colour of the old wall, was neatly spread over the spot. One would imagine that these ingenious devices would have effectually baffled the sharp eyes of the treasure seekers; not so however, for occasionally some energetic individual, by dint of long rods and rapping on the walls, detected the place of concealment. But many of these gold mines escaped detection; thanks to the leniency of the English. The Mooltan people, it is a well known fact, congratulated themselves upon escaping so easily, when their powerful foe might, if disposed, have taken nearly all their property from them.

On my return to Mooltan all the summer houses and large buildings were occupied by officers in civil and military employ; a few, however, holding high appointments, preferred erecting fresh houses. House building was at first very expensive, the material not being easily procured, although any amount of labour could be obtained at a moderate rate of hire. Several of the gardens were in a very dilapidated state, the trees having been wantonly demolished by fanatical Mussulmen, which

was much to be lamented, for some of the destroyed mango trees, not only afforded grateful shelter, but bore delicious fruit. Shortly after my arrival at Mooltan, a steamer was ordered to proceed towards Jhelum. So favourable an opportunity for journeying up a hitherto unexplored river, was too tempting for one who delighted in novelty of scenery, consequently, procuring a passage just half-an-hour previous to the steamer's departure, away I started. No arrangements could be made relative to forming fuel stations to supply the steamers' fires; this considerably delayed our passage, for occasionally, we had the greatest difficulty in collecting a sufficient quantity of wood for even an hour or two's steaming. This was, in a great measure, resulting from the timidity of the villagers, who, terrified at our "smoking fire boat," always fled into the jungles whenever we approached the banks.

The hot weather by this time had almost imperceptibly crept upon us, and no one could help feeling for the poor European seamen, who frequently were obliged to cut up the wood on the banks of the river, exposed to the fierce rays of the sun. Their sable shipmates assisted in this tedious operation, but notwithstanding their united exertions, even after a hard day's labour, scarcely a few hours' fuel could be obtained. Even when the villagers brought us wood, we had frequently to cut the huge

blocks of timber in halves, before they were small enough to enter the fire-place; or perhaps the wood was too green, and then some time would elapse before the engineers could raise the steam sufficient to propel her against the current, which in some places rushed so impetuously down, that the steamer actually lost ground until coal was consumed. No regular pilots could be engaged, and the two Punjabee boatmen who accompanied the expedition could never be depended upon, so the captain of the steamer had to judge for himself respecting the depth of water, &c. &c. Owing to the heavy sand storms, and the force of the stream, we frequently grounded, but fortunately the bed of the river being of a soft and sandy formation, no damage was occasioned to the steamer's bottom; although if proceeding at full power, the concussion was so great, as often to send us sprawling along the deck. The dust storms were very disagreeable, and added greatly to the heat of the atmosphere, as if that element was not already sufficiently oppressive. The waters of the Jhelum are better adapted for drinking than any of the other Punjab rivers; this may be owing to the peculiar nature of the soil over which it runs, for in some places, 12ft and 14ft deep, the minutest object can be seen at the bottom. As we ascended the river the scenery improved wonderfully, particularly in the vicinity of

Russool, when the rocky hills rose up in bold relief, and as our puffing steamer winded through the crystal channel, the Seikh entrenchments occasionally became visible, and even some of their batteries yet remained, constituting a glorious memento of British valour. The first town of note our steamer passed, was Pind Dadun Khan, a place of some importance. The fort can be seen on the right bank of the river; but the town itself was nearly concealed by the dense wood that covers the surrounding country. Since our visit, however, I heard that Pind Dadun Khan had been swept away by the annual inundations which generally take place towards May, though the waters of the Jhelum commence rising at about the latter end of March. On the melting of the snows of the Himilayahs, immense trees float down the Jhelum, many being of gigantic size, and amply remunerating the individual, who brings them down by lashing several trunks together in the form of a raft. During the Seikh rule, these beams had a heavy duty placed on them; however, I believe this only related to timber for house building purposes. Boats of a very large size are built at Jhelum, and are sent to Mooltan, and other principal cities for sale. They are considered as the safest boats that can be procured, being extremely flat-bottomed. Upon nearing the town of Jhelum, the water suddenly became cooler

and clearer; and though it was the month of May, the officers attached to the station, surprised us by cooling their wines in the river. I tried the experiment myself by immersing a warm bottle of beer in the stream, and much to my astonishment discovered the contents to be so intensely cold, that it was impossible to imbibe a glassful at a draught. Fish are abundant and of good quality; several were offered for sale; some of the largest must have weighed fully twenty pounds, the price being so moderate that even poor people became purchasers. Building was not so expensive in comparison with most other stations, which perhaps may be attributable to the facility with which timber is brought down from the hills. A beam forty feet long, and about a foot thick, could be obtained for a rupee or two; bricks likewise were cheap, as well as all other materials requisite for the erection of a bungalow; with the exception of glass for windows, and this last mentioned article had to be brought all the way from Bombay, and hence was very expensive. In Scinde, a vastly different state of affairs existed, when the country was first annexed to our dominions. A diminutive mud hovel cost the builder 1,000 rupees, and the architecture being very imperfect, the building very rapidly fell into dilapidation, the damage in many cases arising from the destructive ravages of white ants.

The reader would scarcely credit the amount of mischief these little insects are capable of committing, even in the course of a few hours. Property of every description is easily destroyed and eaten up by their indefatigable little mouths. Books, furniture, leather boxes, and particularly well-seasoned beams, are most liable to their attacks. It is by no means a rare occurrence for the roofs of houses to fall in, and that too without any previous intimation having been given. Attempts to destroy a nest of white ants are always futile; they are too numerous, and as fast as they are annihilated, fresh swarms arise in some other place. It would prove a very economical speculation, were the house proprietors of Scinde and the Punjab, to construct the roofs of their bungalows of ironwork. The river at Jhelum is tolerably broad in the hot season, it then extends almost a mile if not more, from bank to bank. A ferry has been established opposite Jhelum, but for two or three months in the year, the poorer classes care not to avail themselves of this mode of transit, as the river is fordable. The town is prettily situated, and now contains a population of nearly 5,000 souls.

The native houses, similar to those built in the Punjab, are of mud and brick, with flat roofs; round about the suburbs, a few old ruins are still visible. Since the British have formed a military cantonment in

the vicinity of Jhelum, the trade of that place has wonderfully increased, grain, rice, and coarse woollen stuffs, constitute the principal articles. Sugar has lately been introduced, and the soil appears to be so favourable for its growth, that, no doubt in a short time the cane will be extensively cultivated throughout the district. Unfortunately our steam passage here terminated, the captain having received orders to remain at Jhelum, therefore, I commenced my journey to Lahore overland. An elephant was placed at my disposal, but I afterwards rode a camel part of the way; the animal was rather a quiet looking beast, and I foolishly volunteered to drive him. In my own estimation, the prophet himself could not have enlisted into his service, a superior or more skilful driver. At the commencement we jogged along famously, but the long distance and execrably bad road, tired both camel and rider to such a degree, that, on arriving at the next village, I resolved to procure the aid of a few villagers to carry me on a charpoy to Wuzeerabad.

For the benefit of those who never travelled in India, it will be as well to mention, that a charpoy is a light sort of four-posted bed, generally constructed of Bamboo. Like many other novel introductions, this style of travelling was rather unpleasant, and eventually became far more fatiguing than the motion of a camel.

In fact, what with the heat and dust, the last few miles were really insupportable, but as we had already proceeded some distance, it would have been useless to send back for the camel, and it was now impossible to adopt any substitute for the amelioration of the present perplexing position. The strange appearance of a European carried on a charpoy by common labourers of the soil, certainly, rather astonished the natives, and as our queer procession threaded its way through the long bazaar of Goozerat, a feeling of shame crept over me at finding myself exposed to the curious gaze of such a motley crew. The inhabitants of Goozerat (so a Lahore moonshee informed me) are principally Hindoos and Seikhs, and a rascally set of scamps they all were too.

The country appeared, as we passed through it, to be very productive with respect to vegetables, such as cabbages, turnips, and melons. Wuzeerabad is about eight or nine miles from Goozerat, nor did I regret our arrival at the former station, where, on account of a terrific dust storm, it was impossible to proceed towards Lahore, and a detention of two days forced me to seek the hospitality of a friend, who happened to be stationed in the cantonments. The present barracks for European troops are very comfortable, but formerly, on account of the imperfect drainage, the entire station was inundated, and for a time, the place was considered very

insalubrious. The dust storms have been known to rage, without intermission, for three days, and throughout their duration no duty whatsoever can be carried on. Wuzeerabad is a large and populous city, containing about 50,000 inhabitants. Its principal bazaar extends right through the centre, and presents a tolerably clean appearance; supplies of every description are procurable, including a variety of European articles.

A few English merchants have established warehouses at Wuzeerabad since the annexation of the Punjab. The prices attached to their merchandize are exorbitant, even the most trifling commodities offered for sale realize a handsome profit. A high mud wall surrounds the city, but this could easily be perforated by ball. There are a few fine gardens and buildings scattered about in the neighbourhood; amongst the latter, the Sheeshmahal appears conspicuous above all.

Some assert that, formerly Runjeet Sing resided here, but on that prince's decease the property fell into the possession of a French gentleman, who held an appointment of high rank, subject to the Seikh authority. From Wuzeerabad, nearly all the Kalsa army were supplied with tents, awnings, and cloth for uniforms. It is likewise famous for the manufacture of warlike weapons, particularly swords; however, at present this branch of trade cannot be a very profitable one, as the

inhabitants are prohibited from wearing arms of any kind. Just outside of Wuzeerabad, a glimpse is obtained of the lofty Himilayah range, but the view is very indistinct, and unless advantage is taken of a particularly clear day, the mountains are not visible at all.

The river Chenab is broader than the Jhelum, but its waters are not so clear and agreeable to the taste; this, perhaps is owing to the different formation of its bed, that of the Jhelum, consisting of rocks and sand, whereas the Chenab's is, for the most part, formed of slimy mud and black gravel.

A regular palkee dawk was here procurable, so getting into this comfortable Indian conveyance, we started for Goojeranwallah, distant about twenty-two miles. It was a fine moonlight night, but the country appeared to possess few attractions, in the way of the picturesque. About half way we halted for a quarter of an hour at a celebrated well, supposed to have been excavated by order of the great Ackbar; the water was delicious. Wheat, sugar canes, and large tracts of tobacco, appeared on either side of the road. That which astonished me most was the paucity of canals, a circumstance that attracts the attention of every Punjab traveller. It appears singular that an enterprising and clever prince as Runjeet undoubtedly proved himself to be, should have neglected to supply his land with

water for irrigating the soil, instead of relying upon his subjects making their own arrangements. Perhaps the disturbed state of the country prevented Runjeet from constructing canals. But this Seikh ruler cared little for the interests of his subjects, so long as anything was lacking to the improvement of his army. Latterly, Runjeet possessed a very sordid and miserly disposition, which, perhaps, presented no inconsiderable obstacle to the formation of canals. Yet, considering the slight demand that would have been made upon the treasury, one would be led to suppose that money could not alone, have prevented Runjeet from adding to the revenue, as well as to the comfort of his subjects. Goojeranwallah has attained some celebrity as being the birthplace of Runjeet Singh, and is likewise famous for its large fort, containing a well supplied bazaar, where can bo purchased genuine kashmere shawls, besides a great variety of Affghan commodities.

When I visited the fortress it was garrisoned by the 7th irregular cavalry, who were provided with comfortable quarters, whilst the officers took possession of a commodious brick-house of European fashion, built by Huree Singh a few years ago. The building is a three-storied one, and in the evening we retired to the house-top, where, seated upon neat little fixture seats, we quietly enjoyed our cheroots, and obtained a splendid

view of the interior of the fort. The centre apartment in each story was magnificently ornamented, the walls being decorated with mirrors and paintings, representing a variety of scenes, warlike and sporting. The garden had evidently, in former days, been taken care of, for it appeared to be tastefully laid out; however, some mischievous people had defaced the vineyard, by taking away the framework merely for the sake of its timber. But the most attractive sight was a bath facing the entrance, in which the officers used to perform their morning ablutions; several pretty little fountains sprinkling a lovely cascade over the bathers. After my dusty dawk trip, a plunge in this cool bath was delicious, and so refreshing was it, that I started during the night for Lahore. The country wonderfully improved between Goojeranwallah and the Punjab capital. Cultivation was more extensive, and the gardens belonging to the wealthy Sirdars increased in size and beauty, filling the air with a delightful fragrance. Lahore is a large but filthy city, all, or most of the streets being so extremely narrow, that scarcely three people can perambulate abreast through them, whilst a person on horseback can, with great difficulty, just manage to ride through these little alleys; and when once the lane is entered, the hardy equestrian is forced to proceed, as the narrowness of the street will not

permit his horse to turn round. The city is surrounded by a high brick wall, the raising of which must have made no inconsiderable demand upon the treasury, for the base is fully twenty feet thick, and the barracks for soldiers, that had been erected on the ramparts, must have added to the expenditure. This wall our government lately ordered to be pulled down, and no doubt by this time not a vestige of it remains. After the campaign, when our troops occupied Lahore, officers gladly took up their quarters on the ramparts, but the heat in one of these little pigeon holes was very unpleasant, and a few corpulent tenants suffered dreadfully. However, in those days the fortune of war seldom allowed us to select our own quarters, and to tell the truth, he was a lucky man who could obtain a rampart dormitory for a residence.

From the old race course, one obtains a magnificent view of the palace; the Ravee flows past this noble building, laving the very foundation with its waters. A bridge of boats has been thrown across the river, and a lively scene is perpetually presented at the Ghat, for the immense traffic that passes through Lahore mostly approaches the capital over this pontoon bridge. The Ravee is the smallest of the Punjab rivers, but in scenery, it greatly surpasses its larger competitors; from Lahore to its junction, with the Indus, several romantic and

pretty spots might be pointed out to the admirer of the picturesque. Lahore, since it fell under the management of Sir Henry Lawrence, has undergone many improvements. The town itself was of too great an extent to enable the indefatigable resident to carry out any successful measures, towards the cleanliness of the streets, &c. Sir Henry constructed a garden for the amusement of the European soldiers, who willingly flocked to the pleasure grounds, to enjoy a little fresh air. The residents at the station likewise visited the promenade, and as a band nearly every evening attended, the ladies generally mustered tolerably strong on these occasions. The Punjabees likewise took an interest in the grounds, and the long bearded Seikhs might occasionally be perceived mingling with their pale faced conquerors. The juvenile ex Maharajah frequently appeared on the course, reclining in a carriage, drawn by four horses; he is a fine handsome little fellow of rather a prepossessing appearance, although, from all accounts, nature had not gifted him with a very aimable disposition; but all Eastern princes are alike.

One of Runjeet Singh's officers narrated to me the following anecdote, which if true, does not exhibit the native character in a very favourable light. For the amusement of a young prince, several lads of his own

age frequently played with him in the palace, as well as accompanied him to the bath. On the occasion in question, boy like, they commenced chasing each other round the bathing apartment, until at last, the prince captured his playmate, and contrived in the struggle to push him into the water. Nearly all Eastern baths contain several iron tubes for fountains, and upon one of these sharp projections the unfortunate child was impaled. Naturally enough, the acute pain caused him to scream aloud, at which the prince became highly incensed, and threatened severe chastisement if he did not immediately cease weeping. The poor boy, however, could not restrain his tears, whereupon the prince commanded an attendant to inflict a couple of dozen lashes upon the unoffending lad's back. This ruthless mandate was actually carried into effect, while, so I heard, the boy was bleeding profusely from his late accident. The young tyrant witnessed the flogging operation, accusing the sufferer with "shamming." Imagine the future career of a despotic king, who at the early age of six or seven, betrayed such a disgusting relish for inflicting pain upon his fellow creatures. This, however, is merely a specimen of the commencement of the career of most Eastern princes. From their infancy they become familiarised with every species of barbaric cruelty, and eventually, on approaching the state of manhood, the heart is en-

closed in a strong chest, that completely excludes every humane and generous feeling. Search the annals of the Indian princes who held sway not even a century back, and the reader would blush for the hoary sinners who committed wholesale slaughter, bloody murders, and other lawless oppressions, the perusal of which would be sufficient to sting a generous heart with excruciating pain. Civilization, thank God, is rapidly eradicating these tyrannical proceedings, from not India only but the entire East.

The gardens in the vicinity of Lahore, surpass any I ever inspected during my residence in the Punjab; they formed a favourite resort for pic-nic parties, and from all accounts, in former days these pleasure trips were got up in splendid style. The Seikhs certainly far exceeded their neighbours with respect to pecuniary outlay during their holy festivals. No expense was spared to render their tomashas worthy of their nation. During the festivals and grand days, Lahore was the very centre of gaiety; people from all districts of the Punjab, visiting the capital during these festivals. Debauchery of every description, crime of every line and form, reigned with unblushing effrontery during the celebration of the ancient ceremonies. The large gardens were thrown open to the public, the fountains were kept in perpetual motion, several of them perfuming the air

with a delicious odour of rose water. At night Chinese fireworks added to the gaiety, whilst the city, palace, and temples were illuminated with millions of variably coloured lamps. There are numerous shikaghers scattered about a few miles round Lahore, but their contents have rapidly disappeared, owing to the numbers of Nimrods, who, within the last few years, have visited and shot over the preserves. In fact when after a considerable amount of trouble, I endeavoured to obtain a little sport out of a neighbouring shikagher, the only wild animal that the beaters managed to rouse from his lair, was a small jackall, which, unaccustomed to the society of man, did not betray the slightest signs of fear, but with the greatest *sang froid* trotted quietly past me. Runjeet Singh was a great admirer of the chase, and he encouraged it amongst his wealthy sirdars, so that the country in former years, contained several preserves, within which tigers, leopards, boars, and deer of various kinds might have been shot in abundance. A wild hog is considered a choice dish amongst the Seikhs, and those possessing an epicurian palate, take some pride in producing a very "toothy" dish, made up principally from the head and feet.

A visit to the jewel apartment amply remunerated me for the trouble and nuisance of threading my way through a labyrinth of stinking narrow streets. The

famous Koh-i-nor had not yet been dispatched to England. Several European, Parsee, and Hindoo merchants, have established shops in Lahore, consequently articles of almost every description are procurable in the bazaar; the purchaser, however, has to pay dearly for some things, as the vendors demand most exorbitant prices, particularly if the commodity required happens to be of English manufacture. For instance, on entering a native's shop and asking to be shown, say a lamp, or any other European article, the black usurer makes his foolish customer pay extra, simply on account of the goods being English. If you demur as to the value, the impudent native exclaims, "English ting sahib, dis not Hindostani hartookle." The richest and most expensive Cashmere shawls are exposed for sale, every bazaar contains a shop where these beautiful pieces of apparel are attainable, many of them being valued at 1,000 rupees each. Men generally purchase the shawls, using them as kummerbunds, or waistbands, which is a most barbarous practise, in the ladies' opinons. In passing through the bazaars I was perfectly astonished at the variety of shops that appeared to be carrying on a very profitable trade. Furs were exposed for sale, but no particular care was bestowed upon setting them off, in fact it struck me, that the seller was a very independent sort of fellow, only paying attention to his hookah, whilst he seemed

to care little about receiving visits from purchasers; but in this respect, he merely resembled the generality of his townsfolks. Woollen and cotton stuffs, as well as ornamental jewellery, are manufactured in the bazaar.

Amongst other nuisances existing in Lahore, perhaps that requiring the greatest amelioration is the tribe of fakeers, or holy mendicants, who literally infest the streets and public thoroughfares, many of them stalking along almost in a state of nudity. This class, without any exception, is the most barefaced and impudent batch of scoundrels that could well be selected in India, including the lowest dregs of society. They not only impose upon the people, rich and poor alike, but frequent cases have come to the knowledge of the authorities, where these rascals made it a point to harbour and protect individuals, who, having offended against the established laws of their country, were obliged to conceal themselves in some secure retreat, until the police had given over all further search. The English reader could hardly be induced to credit the amount of wickedness continually being perpetrated by Indian fakeers. The poor superstitious people are easily intimidated by the severe maledictions with which they are threatened, in the event of disobedience; a fakeer has merely to hold up his little finger, mutter a few unpronouncable nonsensical words, and the ignorant victim immediately

becomes subservient to the will of the naked impostor. Many a cruel murder, plots against government, and a variety of other lawless machinations have been nurtured in the dark abodes of these hypocritical saints. The beauty of it is, that these fellows who the people imagine to exist upon almost nothing but prayers, are generally the wealthiest race of men in India, living in a most luxurious state of ease, maintaining a host of attendants, and being extremely assiduous in the promotion of their worldly affairs. It is to be hoped in the course of a few years India will be relieved from these pests, who are in fact, the real and principal drawback to the civilization of the country.

After remaining four months at Lahore, I proceeded to join my regiment which had already started *en route* to Barrackpore. Now the distance from Lahore to the Presidency was about as long a march as could well be selected for a fellow. It was something like dispatching a person to the antipodes; however, adopting the soldier's motto, "to hear is to obey," I proceeded at once towards my destination; so reader, if you feel so disposed, imagine yourself seated alongside of me in the palanqueen, and we will make the best of our way towards Umritsa, distant about twenty miles. The road was a very lonely one, and the country on either side of it was infested by lawless characters, who hesitated not to

attack any travellers, no matter whether Europeans or native. Complaints were daily lodged in the magistrate's office at Lahore; in some cases even Europeans themselves personally attending. Under these circumstances, every dawk traveller going under government orders, was allowed the accompaniment of a guard of sowars, who remained alongside of the palkee. This arrangement was of a two-fold utility; for the armed attendants being mounted, and naturally anxious to make a hasty journey, hurried the bearers along at a splendid rate. Fortunately, a letter of introduction to the commandant of the fort procured me comfortable quarters; in fact I could not withstand the pressing hospitality of my kind host, who would not permit me to start so soon as I had resolved upon. An opportunity thus occurred for leisurely inspecting the renowned fortress, which no doubt would be able to stand out against a small native force; but with respect to its being impregnable, the idea must have emanated from the brain of the builder himself. Since a British detachment has garrisoned the fort, many improvements have been effected in the interior arrangements. The officers' quarters are neat little apartments, and in front, some gardens about three yards square had been constructed by over zealous horticulturists. The well water obtained here is considered the best that can be found in

the Punjab. Umritsa is likewise famous for its celebrated Seikh temple, which during the Hooli festival is illuminated in a manner that defies any Calcutta competion. Few people are thoroughly acquainted with the religion professed by the Seikhs. Its founder, Nanuc, intended it to be a pure Deism, but succeeding ages have corrupted his simple creed, which now is converted into a mixture of almost every religion that is known amongst Eastern people. The Grunth is considered their most sacred volume; but since its first appearance the original text has undergone great alterations. With respect to the Seikhs wearing long hair, the custom was introduced by one of the rulers, who considered this an admirable mode whereby the Seikhs could be distinguished from Mussulmen and Hindoos. The famous Govind raised the "Akali" sect, who being a favoured class of soldiers, were always ready to maintain their reputation for courage, by being the first to engage whatever enemy appeared in the field against their country. During the late campaigns, the Akalees suffered to a great extent; in fact their daring conduct on one or two occasions, called forth the approbation of the British, who are ever ready to bestow their praise upon the brave, even though they were their antagonists. One of these men singly rushed upon the bayonets of a European regiment, the privates however were unwilling

to take advantage of the Akali's temerity, so a strapping grenadier stepped out from the ranks, caught the fanatic by the sword arm, and turning the fellow round quietly, bestowed upon his stern a mild impetus with his toe. The Akalee thus treated, scarcely knew what to think of the matter; but his astonishment must have increased, when he perceived himself permitted to retire without further molestation. Few religions were so rapid in their rise as that of the Seikhs, although the Mahommedan kings strove their utmost towards smothering the already popular faith. The Inquisition in Spain could scarcely exceed the cruelties practised upon the early Seikhs, who were put to severe torture, unless they abjured their creed. In fact, such hostility was displayed against them, that numbers were forced to flee to the Himilayah mountains, where they might maintain their doctrines without being oppressed. In the present work it would be impossible to enter minutely into the subject; however, if the reader takes any interest in the Seikhs, and their religion, let him peruse "The Rise and Progress of the Seikh Nation."

The road from Umritsa to Saharunpore is not very interesting, until you arrive in the vicinity of the latter town; and now occurs a wonderful change in the aspect of the country. Cultivation appears healthier, trees

arrive at a higher growth, and the soil no longer resembles parched sand. At Saharunpore, government supports a magnificent horticultural garden, which is considered to surpass any as yet existing in India; the grounds are tastefully laid out, containing an artificial canal that flows in a serpentine form through the centre; several acres of land are apportioned off for this garden, which annually increases in size. At about the time I passed through Saharunpore, an elephant was roaming at large over the neighbourhood, committing vast devastation amongst the farmers' crops, and creating no small stir amongst the labourers and other inhabitants. The general consternation was greatly increased by the fact of the elephant being a man killer. Government offered a reward of 2,000 rupees to anybody who would either capture or destroy the ferocious terror of the country. Three or four European gentlemen resolved upon chasing the animal; but on its unexpectedly making its appearance, the whole party considered that discretion was the better part of valour, so they beat a rapid retreat, leaving the elephant master of the field. I now changed my palkee for a faster conveyance, and the horses having some stamina in them, we were not long in reaching Meerut; although an accident that might have been attended with fatal consquences, delayed the dawk several hours on the road. At one of

the relays, a couple of only half-broken-in ponies were harnessed to the truck, and taking fright at some object that happened to be passing along the road, they both rushed violently down a steep bank, and before the timid driver knew what they were about, the carriage was dragged right into a deep tank. Fortunately the wheels caught in some obstacle hidden under the water; the traces broke, and the ponies thus freed, swam to the shore; had the leather not given way, either the carriage would have been precipitated into deep water, or the horses might have met with an untimely end; for as it was, they were unable to gain a footing, owing to the depth of the water. The road from Meerut to Calcutta, resembles an old Roman one; it is styled the "grand trunk," and is allowed to be one of the longest and best roads in Asia; it is constructed of a peculiar sort of earth, denominated kunkar, selected on account of its great durability. In the course of another half century, the after generation will behold with wonder the avenue of trees that will in those days overshadow the road; for government some ten years ago, planted small trees at certain intervals from one another, on either side of this extensive thoroughfare. I enjoyed my trip to Allahbad amazingly; the country was so very different to that of Scinde or the Punjab; it appeared evident that civilization had made gigantic strides in the Upper Provinces,

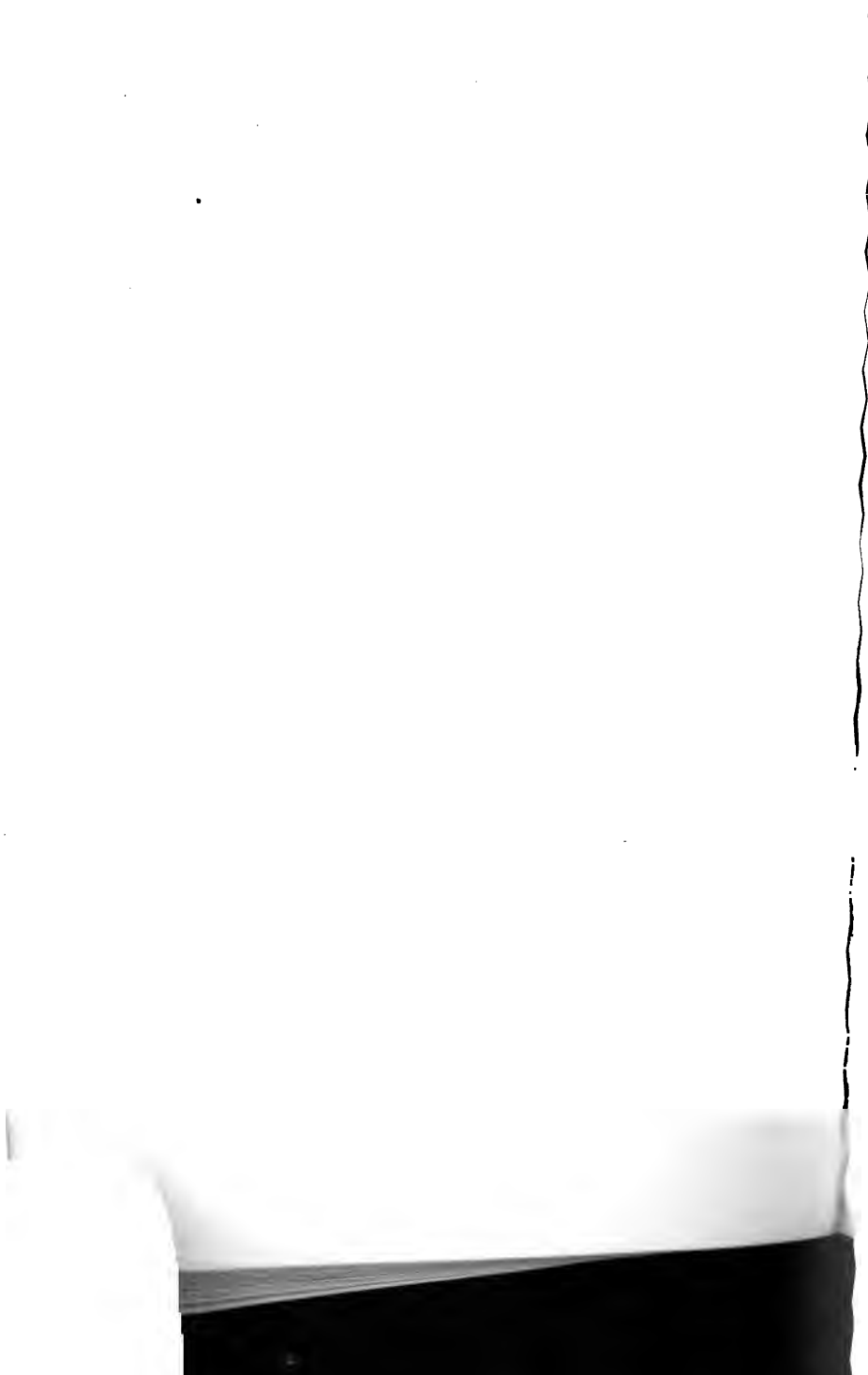
and the people were fully sixty years in advance of their neighbours residing in the Lower Countries.

The station of Allahbad is one of the prettiest in India, situate some 800 miles above Calcutta. The fort stands on the left bank of the river, and presents an imposing appearance from the opposite shore; several prisoners of rank have within the last few years been confined within its sombre walls. The military cantonments are extensive and considered healthy, which may be owing to their exposure to the north easterly wind. There are large shady drives extending a few miles into the country. The place is held in some repute by the Hindoos, on account of the junction of the rivers Jumna and Ganges, which unite a little above the fort.

Pilgrims from all parts of Hindostan annually congregate here for religious bathing ceremonies. The river steamers do not proceed higher than Allahbad, on account of the intricate passage; and, in fact, they frequently ground when within a short distance of that station. On applying to the agent a passage was secured, and we paddled down the Ganges at a tremendous pace, for the stream runs like a torrent between Allahbad and Dinapore. The holy city of Benares we soon reached, and whilst the steamer received her cargo of coals, a few of us visited part of the town. Of

course, a short hurried visit of a couple of hours was not sufficient to enable us to inspect any of the famous Hindoo temples, or buildings, which we were informed were well worthy the trouble of viewing. On returning to the steamer we perceived a snake-charmer, offering for sale almost every species of snake that crawls upon the Hindostani soil. One man only asked a couple of rupees for a small boa constrictor, and I reluctantly was obliged to let this favourable offer escape, on account of our lady passengers, who would not for a moment consent to remain on board, with a large snake as a fellow-traveller. A cobra likewise was exhibited, but no one became a purchaser, although the charmer assured us that he had extracted the poisonous *fangs*. However harmless they might actually have been, still a cobra is rather a nasty pet. Their hissing propensities when irritated, are sufficient to alarm a man possessed of very strong nerves. There is something very startling in the sound, and once or twice when I have trodden upon these reptiles, I have imagined that their bite had taken effect upon me. As the man had had a great deal of trouble in showing us all his snakes, I was unwilling to allow him to depart without purchasing some of his poisonous goods, consequently, I bought a large scorpion, resolving to experimentalize upon him. We placed him under a

tumbler in company with a mouse, which eventually discovered that his fellow-prisoner was by no means an agreeable comrade under difficulties, for the poor little animal was stung to death. In looking at a scorpion through a microscope, one would imagine that they had six eyes; and at the end of the tail an appendage appears, bearing some resemblance to a garden rake. In some parts of India these reptiles are very numerous, and are much dreaded by the inhabitants; even English officers regard them as objects of apprehension. A long boot is a famous hiding place for them, and I always made my bearer place his hand inside, before I attempted to pull it on my leg. If suddenly disturbed they cock up their tails, and endeavour to conceal themselves in a crevice or behind anything that chance to fall in their way. Some cases have occurred where the bite of a scorpion has caused death. We were not long in leaving Benares and its snake charmers far behind us when the steam was raised, and so fast did we proceed, that next day I caught up my regiment which was dropping down the river in native boats. After my constant knocking about, it was some satisfaction to enjoy the prospect of a slight repose.



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